

PAUL KRUGER AND HIS TIMES. BY F. REGINALD STATHAM

AUTHOR OF "BLACKS, BOERS,
AND BRITISH," "MR. MAGNUS,"
"SOUTH AFRICA AS IT IS," &c.

WITH PORTRAIT AND MAP



LONDON T. FISHER UNWIN.
BOSTON: E. C. PAGE & COMPANY

MDCCLXXI

First edition, 1,500 copies, April 18, 1898.
Second impression, 600 copies, May 2, 1898.

PREFACE

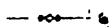
ONE of the chief difficulties in writing a biography of President Kruger arises from his own reluctance to talk either about himself or his career. The reluctance cannot but be respected, though it may well be wished that it could be overcome. Beyond this, the earlier records of Transvaal history are both slender and scattered.

The author most gratefully acknowledges his indebtedness to Dr. G. M. Theal, the distinguished author of the "History of South Africa," who has kindly supplied the key to the true history of various matters connected with the South African Republic, especially in the earlier stages of its existence. Dr. Jorissen's book, too, "Transvaalsche Herinneringen," has proved of the utmost service in respect of later events.

F. R. S.

March 1898.

CONTENTS



CHAP	PAGE
I. THE KRUGERS AND THE CAPE	I
II. THE KRUGERS AND THE TREK	15
III. PAUL KRUGER AND THE REPUBLIC	43
IV. KRUGER AND THE ANNEXATION	70
V. KRUGER AS THE PEOPLE'S ADVOCATE	98
VI. KRUGER AND THE WAR	122
VII. KRUGER AND THE CONVENTIONS	150
VIII. KRUGER AND THE GOLDFIELDS	181
IX. KRUGER AND RHODES	198
X. KRUGER AND THE "REFORMERS"	214
XI. KRUGER AND THE RAID	260
XII. KRUGER RE-ELECTED	297

CHAPTER I

THE KRUGERS AND THE CAPE

THAT Paul Kruger, the President of the South African Republic, occupies a prominent and unique place among men of the time, no one will venture to deny. The fact would be admitted perhaps even more readily by those who assail him than by those who appreciate him. Among those who assail him there prevails, it may be, something of the feeling that animated the ranks of the Tuscan army in their estimate of the gallantry of Horatius. Herminius and Spurius Lartius were, comparatively speaking, negligible quantities. The real spirit of the defence of Rome against the Tuscan advance was present in Horatius. It was he who had organised the defence of the city; it was he who had borne the chief burden of that defence; and on him descended equally the praise of his compatriots and the bitterness of his country's enemies. "But for this stay," said the latter, "ere close of day we should have sacked the town." Much the same

PAUL KRUGER

feeling animates those who, having dreamed of and planned the destruction of the South African Republic, have met with the steady and unwearying resistance of the patriotic forces which Paul Kruger has personified and expressed. And it is, in a considerable measure, by reason of his personifying and expressing this resistance that Paul Kruger is today included among the small number of men whose names and whose careers are familiar to the mind of every dweller in the civilised areas of the earth's surface. For it is certain that if at this moment there are five persons in the world whose names everywhere awaken the sense of a strong and distinct individuality, among those five will be, and must be, included the name of the President of the South African Republic.

Notoriety of this kind—but why not call it fame?—depends partly on surrounding circumstances and partly on individual character. There is fame, as may often be seen, that depends far less upon individual character than on circumstances. There is, on the other hand, fame that depends far less on circumstances than on individual character. There is one well-known European instance in which the hereditary succession to a great name and to the accomplisher of great deeds has given world-wide currency to acts and sayings which in themselves would perhaps hardly be worthy of notice.

These hereditary associations are like hereditary estates. They start their possessor at a level which, even if he does nothing but steadily gravitate downhill, still keeps him well before the observation of the world. When there are neither hereditary associations nor hereditary estates, notoriety—or let us again call it fame—may be acquired by striking personal success or striking personal devotion. The last twenty years of South African history have supplied us with instances of both kinds; for while the worldwide fame of Cecil Rhodes rests upon personal success, the worldwide fame of Paul Kruger rests upon personal devotion.

It is impossible to avoid this comparison. The trend of circumstances has been such that each of these two names suggests the other. It must be admitted, too, as a remarkable fact that South Africa, a country so little heard of till within the last twenty years, should, during those twenty years, have produced two out of the five most noted personalities of the later decades of this century. Both, as it may be said, have emerged from obscurity; both have brought marked personal characteristics to bear upon the circumstances by which they were surrounded; both have succeeded in respect of the main object of their endeavours; and both, in respect of minor matters,

PAUL KRUGER

have to a certain extent failed. Both have their enthusiastic disciples; both have their unsparing critics; each presents a problem which will possess a deep philosophical interest for the historian yet to be. But in the meantime, seeing how large a part may be played in South African affairs by public opinion in Great Britain and in Europe, and seeing how scantily that public opinion is informed as to the real nature and dimensions of the forces which Paul Kruger represents, it may be permissible to make at least some effort to define them, and to throw upon them such light as may be derived from the character and career of the most remarkable personality with which they have ever been associated.

It is not until the year 1713 that the name of Kruger appears in the records of the Dutch East India Company at Capetown. The year was a critical one in the history of the Company's settlement, and marked a critical period in the history of South African colonisation. It was a critical year in the history of Capetown as the year in which occurred the first, and most fatal outbreak of small-pox—an outbreak which reduced the European population of the settlement by at least 20 per cent., and which all but exterminated the Hottentot population in its vicinity. It was a critical year in the

THE KRUGERS AND THE CAPE

history of South African colonisation, because it signalled the centre of a period of immigration which has left most abiding marks upon the country. It is impossible to glance over the lists of arrivals between the years 1705 and 1720 without becoming alive to the fact that during those years South Africa was enriched by many of the families that are most distinguished at the present day. Unlike the Huguenot immigrants of some forty years previously, these immigrants represented no special European nationality and had not been urged abroad by any special hardships or acts of tyranny. They represented various nationalities — Dutch, French, and German, and their movement was doubtless the result of the generally disturbed condition of Western Europe. One of the natural channels for emigration lay through Holland, then the colonising power of Europe, just as to-day the natural channel for emigration from Eastern Europe lies through England. The name of Jacob Kruger, the original founder, or "stemyader," of the Kruger family, finds a place in a list that reads almost like a South African directory. There are, in this list to be found Badenhorst (the name to-day of wealthy residents in the southern portion of the Orange Free State); de Beer (now represented by a member of the First Volksraad at Pretoria); Bester (a name well known in Natal); Bignaut

(State-Secretary at Bloemfontein); Bosman (a respected pastor of the Dutch Reformed Church in the Transvaal); Brand (ancestor of the most famous President of the Free State); van Breda (one of the leaders in the original Dutch Republic in Natal); Combrink (a name well known to-day in Capetown); Faure (represented by influential wine-farmers in the Western Province); Fick (whose name is preserved in the Free State town of Ficksburg); van der Heever (to be found in the Cape Parliament); de Jager (Transvaal Volksraad); Kloppe (Chairman of the First Volksraad at Pretoria); Maasdorp (a name honoured at the Cape Bar); Maritz (ancestor of the founders of the capital of Natal); Meintjes (Second Volksraad at Pretoria); van Reenen (one of the owners of the famous Constantia vineyards near Capetown, the name being also preserved in the title of the pass through the Drakensberg mountains between the Free State and Natal); van Rooyen (a frequent name in Natal and on the Transvaal border of Zululand); Smit (late Vice-President of the Transvaal); Steenkamp (Pretoria Volksraad); Uys (originator of the well-known family on the Transvaal-Zululand border); Vorster (Pretoria Volksraad); de Waal (well known in the Cape Legislative Assembly as well as in the Transvaal Civil Service). These are but a few instances in a list which includes

THE KRUGERS AND THE CAPE

also the names of Bronkhorst, Ferreira, Haarhof, van Heerden, de Kock, Krysauw, Maré, Munnik, van Rensburg, Roos, van der Spuy, Vermaak, de Vries, and others which are easily recognised as identified with the South Africa—more especially the Republican South Africa—of to-day.

It was to this rich stream of immigration that Jacob Kruger, the founder of the Kruger family, practically belonged. It arrived on the shores of South Africa at a moment which, in spite of local disasters, was on the whole propitious. The growth and consolidation of the settlement in Table Mountain Valley was leading to the gradual enlargement of the colonial boundaries and to the slow extension of civilised life and rule eastward and northward. That the representatives of the Dutch East India Company did not do much to encourage this movement may be easily believed. Their chief concern was the maintenance of a revictualling station for the Company's ships on their voyages to and from the East Indies,¹ and it could hardly please them altogether to see their responsibilities extended over an ever-increasing area in which they could exercise

¹ Mr. Bryce, in his "Impressions of South Africa," rather contemptuously speaks of the Dutch East India Company having for their object the making of "a cabbage garden" at the Cape. Their object, however, was precisely the same as that of the British Government in later years, viz., the establishment of a half-way station on the voyage to the East Indies.

but little control. Their attitude in this respect, indeed, would seem to have been much the same as that of the earlier military Governors of the Cape of Good Hope after it had passed under the British flag. Capetown was a convenient and strategically important half-way house between Europe and the East, and to this object every other consideration had to be subordinated. There are indications that the ruling powers in Capetown, in the early part of last century, did not view without uneasiness the advent of a population possessed of no inconsiderable enterprise and independence, and free from any of that patriotic sentiment that might be supposed to impress Dutchmen with the claims of a Dutch institution. Nevertheless the immigrants arrived and continued to arrive; and as the lands in the more immediate neighbourhood of Table Bay were taken up, the newcomers and their descendants naturally spread themselves northwards and eastwards, into the less-inhabited districts, moving slowly forward with their wagons and their growing flocks till, by the time the eighteenth century had run three-quarters of its course, the north-eastern boundary of the Colony was well up towards the Orange River, and as far east as the site of the present pretty little town of Colesberg.

It is interesting to take note of this gradual migration, because it serves to throw a certain

amount of light on the more general migration northward—the “Great Trek,” as it is called—of some sixty years ago. The movement from the neighbourhood of Capetown to the banks of the Orange River was not, it may be taken for granted, accomplished without considerable hardship and suffering. It was a movement through a country for the most part barren and desolate, affording at the best of times little pasture for the passing flocks and liable to long periods of drought, while the winters, at an elevation of three to four thousand feet above sea-level, were often inclement in the extreme. Besides these drawbacks, moreover, there were all the risks and dangers of a journey through an almost unknown and completely uncivilised country, subject always to the attacks of enemies—the Bushmen—who were possessed of an exasperating capacity for plunder and destruction. It seems not improbable, indeed, that only the hardiest and most enterprising of the colonial families would have entered on such a pilgrimage at all, and that it was these same families that, when the necessity for a further move into the wilderness seemed to arise, became its natural leaders.

That the Kruger family took a part, and a leading part, in these migrations, there is abundant evidence to show. In 1778 Governor van Pletten-

berg, who held office at Capetown from 1774 to 1785, made a journey to what is now known as the Colesberg district, then forming the extreme north-east corner of the Colony. This journey, a matter of considerable fatigue and hardship, was undertaken in response to a petition from the farmers resident in the district, praying to be allowed such rudimentary institutions of civilisation as a landdrost's (magistrate's) court and a church. The petition was forwarded to Capetown by Jan Kruger, a grandson of the founder of the family, and bore his signature, as well as the signatures of Jan, Adrian Venter, Adrian van Jaarsveld, Jan Oosthuizen and thirty other heads of families who had found a bleak home for themselves in this *ultima Thule* of South African settlement. How inclement the climate might at times become was forcibly demonstrated to Governor van Plettenberg by the skeletons of some three thousand sheep that had perished in a snowstorm a few months before his visit. It was in a large degree the hardships resulting from so inclement a climate that procured for the settlers in this district, the Sparta of the Cape Colony, a reputation for sternness and stubbornness. Besides the risks from the climate, the farmers were suffering seriously from the depredations of their old enemies the Bushmen, and it was one of their complaints that their families were

THE KRUGERS AND THE CAPE 11
exposed to unnecessary danger from this source while they were away at Stellenbosch, where they were registered as burghers, going through their annual military exercises. Cut off as they were both from a church and a court of justice, and their children deprived of education, their lot was by no means an enviable one. Yet, in spite of all the hardships they endured, it does not seem to be hinted that these stalwart frontier men, under any circumstances contemplated a retreat.

From these facts it would appear that the Kruger family were already, before the close of last century, occupying a leading and authoritative position among the most enterprising and hardiest of the frontier farmers, and it cannot be doubted that that position was accorded to them by virtue of their capacity to deal with the circumstances of the situation. Governor van Plettenberg, who seems to have been one of the most capable of the Dutch administrators, complied with the prayer of the petition as far as possible, compliance being rendered easier by the undertaking of the petitioners to subscribe liberally towards the cost of the new establishments. The Governor's journey was also utilised for the purpose of marking out more accurately the northern and eastern boundaries of the settlement. To mark the extreme north-eastern boundary of the Colony he erected

what became known as "Plettenberg's Beacon," on the bank of the Zeekoe River (then known as Plettenberg's River), a tributary of the Orange River, and it is significant of the wild state of the country at the time that during his visit twenty hippopotami were killed in this river in one day. After determining the limits of the Colony towards the north-east, van Plettenberg proceeded southwards, and, by agreement with the chiefs of the warlike Xosa tribes, fixed the eastern frontier at the Great Fish River. These are the boundaries that appear on the map of 1795, the year in which the Cape first came under the British flag.

The political storms that swept over the northern hemisphere towards the close of the eighteenth century were not without their effect upon the settlements in South Africa. Abuses in the administration created deep discontent among the independently minded settlers, to whom at the same time the revolt of the North American Colonies seemed to supply the suggestion of a remedy. While in the outlying districts the Company's authority and control were hardly perceptible, in Capetown itself they were asserted to a degree and with a force which produced a feeling akin to exasperation. Not content with preserving order, the Company's officials sought to exercise

a tyrannical interference in the private affairs of individuals. This abuse of authority at last culminated in the forcible deportation to Batavia of a certain Buitendag, against whom some complaint had been made of violence to members of his family. Such arbitrary conduct supplied fresh justification to those who were already agitating for administrative reform, and the act was so little approved by the higher authorities that Buitendag, on reaching Batavia, was at once allowed to return to Capetown, dying, however, on the return voyage.

These events, which served to create a serious breach between the representatives of the Dutch East India Company and the more intelligent and independent of the colonists, exercised a somewhat important influence when, a few years later, the conflict between England and France led to a demand for the practical handing over to Great Britain of the South African Settlements. The demand came upon a community divided against itself. The tyranny and weakness of the Dutch Company disposed not a few of the colonists to look with favour on any kind of change, even at the cost of coming under the sway of a foreign Power. With little serious resistance Capetown was occupied by a British garrison, who nominally held the settlement, on behalf of the Netherlands Government, as against possible French aggression. The change, it may

be taken for granted, exercised but little effect on the farmers in the frontier districts of the Colony. The Company's Government did little for them and interfered with them less, and the new administration, so long as Capetown itself was made secure, had no desire to display any greater activity. It was not until the possession of the Cape was finally confirmed to Great Britain that British administrators began, by the irritating exercise of autocratic authority, to imitate the faults that had led to the unpopularity of the Dutch East India Company.

Meantime, battling with hardships and quietly cherishing their regard for their independence, the frontier farmers waited and watched. Had the representatives of Great Britain been less domineering and more, regardful of the feelings and interests of those over whom they exercised control, how different the history of South Africa might have been! But as it has been in the later years of the present century, so it was in the earlier years. Contempt and ignorance on one side produced suspicion and estrangement on the other, the antagonism thus created leading to events the effects of which have been no less important than far-reaching.

CHAPTER II.

THE KRUGERS AND THE TREK

“No people, not of British descent ever offered such favourable material for conversion into loyal British subjects as did the South Africans when they came by conquest under British rule.”

In this weighty sentence Dr. Theal, in his able and impartial “History of South Africa,” describes one of the great South African possibilities which, nearly a century after the first planting of the British flag on that continent, still remains unfulfilled. • Indeed, in this year of 1898 its fulfilment seems further off than ever. There is a far sharper antagonism between the forces represented by President Kruger and those represented by the latest form of British aggressiveness, than there was in the days of Lord Glenelg and the emigrant farmers or even in those of Lord Carnarvon and President Burgers. Not only has the antagonism become closer and more intimate, but the memory

of past events serves to give additional bitterness to incidents of the moment. The forts that to-day overlook Pretoria are only the natural outcome—natural, that is, so long as the policy of the Colonial Office in London continues to work on its old mistaken lines—of the retirement of the best blood of the Cape Colony from British authority in 1835 and the resistance to British rule in the Transvaal in 1880.

In tracing the development of the remarkable personality of Paul Kruger we practically trace the history of the causes that have driven into an attitude of watchful antagonism towards the British race and British rule a people eminently qualified to form an important and valuable factor in the population of a British Empire, and always ready, if they were only permitted, to maintain the utmost friendliness with that Empire. The two chief causes of this attitude of watchful antagonism are not difficult to trace. They are to be found in the personal vanity of British statesmen who have successively exercised control over colonial policy, and in the wholesale and almost ceaseless slander and misrepresentation with which the Dutch race in South Africa—the settlers who occupied the country when it came under the British flag—have been pursued. These two causes have between them contrived the fatal evil from which South Africa has for nearly

a century suffered and from which it continues to suffer. One without the other would have been comparatively harmless. Even the vanity of the vainest of Colonial Secretaries could not fly in the face of facts which were known to the public, and even the most unscrupulous inventors of fiction must fail if their inventions were honestly scrutinised by an impartial and cool-headed occupant of the Colonial Office. The inventors of fiction have been sometimes missionaries, sometimes officials, sometimes (though not so often) journalists, sometimes traders, sometimes speculators. Their object has been in all cases almost precisely the same, viz., the attaining of some end in which they have been personally interested. There has also been a marked similarity in the methods they have pursued, their chief weapon being always the systematic poisoning of the public mind in Great Britain with false or grossly exaggerated reports, circulated in such a manner that the slow-paced contradiction of those who are slandered comes too late to act as an antidote. It has been by such means that, between races largely akin by descent, by language, and by sentiment has been engendered an atmosphere of suspicion and hostility that has not failed on three several occasions at least to be electrified into open war.

The central point, as it may be called, of modern

South African history is the event that, in a manner singularly forcible and picturesque, first marked the strength of the antagonism between British authority and South African settlers. That event is, of course, the exodus of the emigrant farmers, popularly spoken of as "The Great Trek." The causes and nature of this movement, which may be said to have extended over the four years commencing with the 1st of January, 1836, have, in common with so many South African matters, been variously misrepresented. Of several of these misrepresentations Dr. Theal lucidly disposes,¹ and it will be sufficient here to say that the "Great Trek" was in no respect a continuation of former expansion, that it was not founded on any objection to the freeing of the domestic slaves of the Cape settlers nor on any desire to be free from the restraints of law. The men who took part in it as leaders were men of reputation and substance, and under their guidance and control the movement became a wholesale exodus of a settled population, driven by stress of circumstances, political and other, to seek for new homes in a country which was practically an unknown wilderness. The movement was carried on openly and deliberately, with full notice to the British authorities, who declared that they had no legal ground for interfering with it.

¹ "History of South Africa," vol. iv. (1834-1854), pp. 90-92.

Probably the true causes that lay behind it were never more truly and clearly stated than in the document published at Grahamstown in January, 1837, by Piet Retief—the talented leader who, little more than twelve months later, fell a victim to the treachery of the Zulu king. The document well deserves to be quoted.

“We despair,” it commenced, “of saving the Colony from those evils which threaten it by the turbulent and dishonest conduct of [native] vagrants, who are allowed to infest the country in every part; nor do we see any prospect of peace or happiness for our children in a country thus distracted by internal commotions.

“We complain of the severe losses which we have been forced to sustain by the emancipation of our slaves, and the vexatious laws which have been enacted respecting them.

“We complain of the continual system of plunder which we have for years endured from the Kafirs and other coloured classes, and particularly by the last invasion of the Colony, which has desolated the frontier districts and ruined most of the inhabitants.

“We complain of the unjustifiable odium which has been cast upon us by interested and dishonest persons, under the name of religion, whose testimony is believed in England to the exclusion of all.

‘evidente in our favour,’ and we ‘can foresee, as a result of this prejudice, nothing but the total ruin of the country.’

Further paragraphs declared the intention of the emigrants to uphold “the just principles of liberty”; to establish proper relations between master and servant, while prohibiting slavery; and not to molest any people or deprive them of the smallest property, while at the same time fully prepared and determined to defend themselves against attack. The final paragraph of the declaration read as follows:—

“We are now leaving the fruitful land of our birth, in which we have suffered enormous losses and continual vexation, and are about to enter a strange and dangerous territory; but we go with a firm reliance on an all-seeing, just, and merciful God, whom we shall always fear and humbly endeavour to obey.”

There are about this declaration a dignity and a resolve which, to persons possessed of the like qualities, need no recommendation. Its special value, as an historical document, lies in the fact that every complaint refers to a well-known and established grievance, each of which by itself was highly calculated to wound the self-respect and to endanger the fortunes of the colonial burghers.

The vagrancy complained of, coupled as it was with serious injury to property and danger to life,

was the direct result of the policy laid down by Lord Glenelg, as Colonial Secretary, in the face of remonstrances from Sir Benjamin D'Urban, who was then Governor of the Colony and High Commissioner, after the terrible native war of 1835, which had commenced at Christmas-time in the preceding year by wholesale massacre of Europeans and the destruction of their farms. Lord Glenelg, whose personal vanity was reinforced by the misrepresentations of missionaries, in whose favour he was prejudiced, justified the native rising, overruled the arrangements made by Sir Benjamin D'Urban for the security of the European population, and practically set the seal of an Imperial sanction upon the depredations committed on the farmers. As regards the losses sustained through the emancipation of the slaves, the story is well known—how well-considered schemes for a gradual emancipation, originating in the Colony, were rudely swept aside; how the sum set apart for compensation only represented about one-third of the estimated loss; and how even the payment of this sum was so provided for that in many cases the slave-owners received no benefit whatever. The complaint as to the odium cast upon the settlers "in the name of religion," had a solid justification in the proceedings of certain missionaries who, with Dr. Philip at their head, backed

up the marauding Kafir, denounced the statesmanlike and moderate policy of Sir Benjamin D'Urban, and, with the picturesque assistance of two presumably converted Kafir chiefs, carried off a campaign of malignant denunciation of South African colonists, Dutch and English alike, throughout Great Britain.¹ What Dr. Philip did then has been done since, and in the same way, as will be seen, and with results no less dangerous and exasperating.

It was under these conditions that, in the early part of the year 1836, the northward movement across the Orange River began, the emigrants for the most part travelling in bands, each under an elected commandant. The first party that started was of no very considerable size. It consisted of families from the district of Albany—the district of which Grahamstown is the capital—under the leadership of Louis Triefhard, who took with him his wife and four children. There were also included in the party the families of Carel Triefhard, Hendrik Boothe, J. Prétorius, G. Scheepers, H. Strydom, and J. Albrecht. It seems probable that the early departure of Louis Triefhard was owing to the fact that, in consequence of the violence of his language against the British Government after the war, a large reward had been offered for his

¹ Theal's "History of South Africa," vol. iv. (1834-1854) pp. 52-54.

apprehension. Before crossing the border Trie-
 chard's party was swelled by the addition of another
 party under van Rensburg, which included families
 of Bronkhorst, De Wet, van Wyk, Viljoen,
 Aucamp, and Prins. Their wanderings were far
 and not fortunate. They penetrated by slow stages
 to Zoutpansberg, in the north-east of the Transvaal.
 There the two parties separated, that under van
 Rensburg suffering what was believed at the time
 to be total annihilation at the hands of a native
 tribe. Triechar'd's party moved on in the direction
 of Delagoa Bay, where, after enduring great hard-
 ships, as well as losses from fever, they were
 hospitably entertained by the Portuguese authorities.
 There, too, the leader, Louis Triechar'd, died, the
 survivors of the party, sadly diminished in numbers,
 finding their way back by sea to Natal.¹

These two movements, which may almost be
 regarded as one, represented the beginnings of the
 great emigration from the comparatively settled
 districts of the Cape Colony into the unknown
 wilderness beyond the Orange River. The second
 movement was one which, so far as present purposes
 are concerned and by reason of its influence upon

¹ In 1895 the grandson of Louis Triechar'd was among the
 Transvaal burghers who visited Delagoa Bay in connection with
 the opening of the railway. The same cordiality was extended
 to him as to his grandfather, whose grave he was able to visit.

the future of the interior of South Africa, demands a more careful consideration. This movement originated in the district of Tarka—a district lying close against what was then the eastern frontier of the Colony, and was under the direction of Commandant Andries Hendrik Potgieter, who has been described as “a substantial burgher of kindly disposition and moderate views.” The party which he directed, however, was not wholly drawn from the Tarka district. Attached to it, and acknowledging Potgieter’s authority, was a body of burghers from the district of Colesberg, then, as has been seen, the extreme north-eastern district of the Colony. This body of burghers included Carél Cilliers, with his wife and six children, Jan du Toit and his family, Jan Botha and his family, three families of the Krugers, eight families of the Liebenbergs, four families of the Brookhuizens, four families of the Brits, and three families of the van Rensburgs. The Cilliers’—more recently spelt Celliers—have always been distinguished for their talents and independence, while du Toits are at this day to be found in leading positions throughout all South Africa. What, however, is particularly interesting in connection with the present essay, is the fact that in one of the three families of Krugers was included, as a boy then some ten years old, Stephanus Johannes Paulus Kruger, who now

stands before the world as the President of the South African Republic.

The history of the Kruger family in South Africa is a matter which may be studied with some considerable interest, as typical of the history of not a few families whose members have achieved more or less distinction. There would appear to have been no less than five families or individuals of this name who found a home under the Southern Cross. For example, there was Jan Hendrik Kruger, of Holstein, who went out to South Africa in 1747 in the service of the Dutch East India Company. He married in due course, but his family do not seem to be traceable beyond the year 1793, or thereabouts. Then there was William Kruger—or Cruger—of Keulen, who in 1759 married one Susannah Margaretha Vanton. There was, further, Jan Krugen, of Stralsund, who in 1777 married Elizabeth Venter, a member of a family which has left its impress on the earlier civilisation of South Africa. There was also Hendrik Kruger, the names of whose parents are unknown, who, about the middle of last century, was registered as a burgher of Drakenstein. The Kruger, however, in whom South Africa is specially interested was Jacob Kruger, who migrated to South Africa in the service of the Dutch East India Company in the year 1713. The Company, it may be observed,

was in the habit of recruiting the ranks of its officials from all parts of Europe. Thus the founder of the South African family of Ferreira originally joined the Company's service from Lisbon; other officials, possessors of well-known names, came from France, from Sweden, or even from Scotland; while Jacob Kruger, the ancestor of the President of the South African Republic, came from Berlin—a fact, no doubt, which is calculated to arrest the attention of those who delight in allegations of German intrigue in Pretoria. Jacob Kruger, it would seem, was the son of Frans Kruger (whose name in his will is written "Cruger"), and Elizabeth Hartwigs. His mother, who was left a widow prior to 1720, was at that date living in the little town of Sadenbeck, in the Potsdam district.

Jacob Kruger, who, according to evidence furnished by his will, was born in 1686, went to the Cape in the service of the Dutch East India Company in 1713, at a time noted for the reinforcement of the European element in South Africa by many families whose names are now almost as household words in that continent. While in the service of the Company, he married Johanna Kemp, a lady born in the Colony, and in 1718 rejoiced in the birth of his eldest son, Jacob. About this time, however, owing apparently to an

accident of some kind, his connection with the Company terminated. Official records show that, in consequence of losing one of his hands, he could no longer remain in the Company's service, and that, in January, 1718, he claimed from the Company his rights as a burgher, the claim being duly allowed. Doubtless in accordance with the movement of the time, he occupied and secured a grant of waste lands lying beyond the then recognised frontier of the Colony, although still registered as a burgher of the Stellenbosch district, in the vicinity of Capetown. After his assumption of his rights as a burgher he was blessed with seven children in addition to his first-born, Jacob, these being Frans (born in 1719), Cecilia (1721), Johannes (1722), Elizabeth (1723), Hendrik (1725), Piet Ernst (1726), and Catharina (1728).

Most of these children married and had families. In dealing with the second generation of Krugers, however, the interest chiefly centres in the sixth child, and fourth son, Hendrik. Early marriages were then, as now, the rule among the Dutch-speaking settlers in the Colony, and in 1746, or 1747 Hendrik, born in 1725, married Francina Cloete, a daughter of one of the most noted and well-descended Cape families. The marriage was a most prolific one, no less than eighteen children, sons and daughters in almost equal proportion,

resulting from it. So far, however, as present purposes are concerned the interest chiefly centres on the eldest and second sons, Johannes Jacob and Gerrit, the former born in 1748 and the latter in 1750. Johannes Jacob was the father of six children, Hendrik being the eldest, while Gerrit was the father of eight, of whom the fourth child and second son was Stephanus Johannes. It is at about this point of the family history that we become alive to the curious and intricate manner in which the Krügers are mixed up with another well-known South African family, the Steenkamps, a representative of which is at this day a member of the First Volksraad in Pretoria. Both Hendrik and Stephanus Johannes, first cousins, and great-grandsons of the original Jacob Kruger, married members of the Steenkamp family, Hendrik marrying, about 1790, Anna Catherina Steenkamp, and Stephanus Johannes marrying, about 1796, Sophia Margaretha Steenkamp, niece of Anna Catherina. Besides these, moreover, there were two other links between the Krugers and Steenkamps; for a certain Maria Magdaléna Putter, who married a Steenkamp in 1780, and was after a few years left a widow, took for her second husband Pieter Kruger, a grandson of the original Jacob Krüger, while in 1810 a Catherina Wilhelmina Lavina Steenkamp married Jacobus

Cornelis Krüger, another descendant from the old Kruger stock.

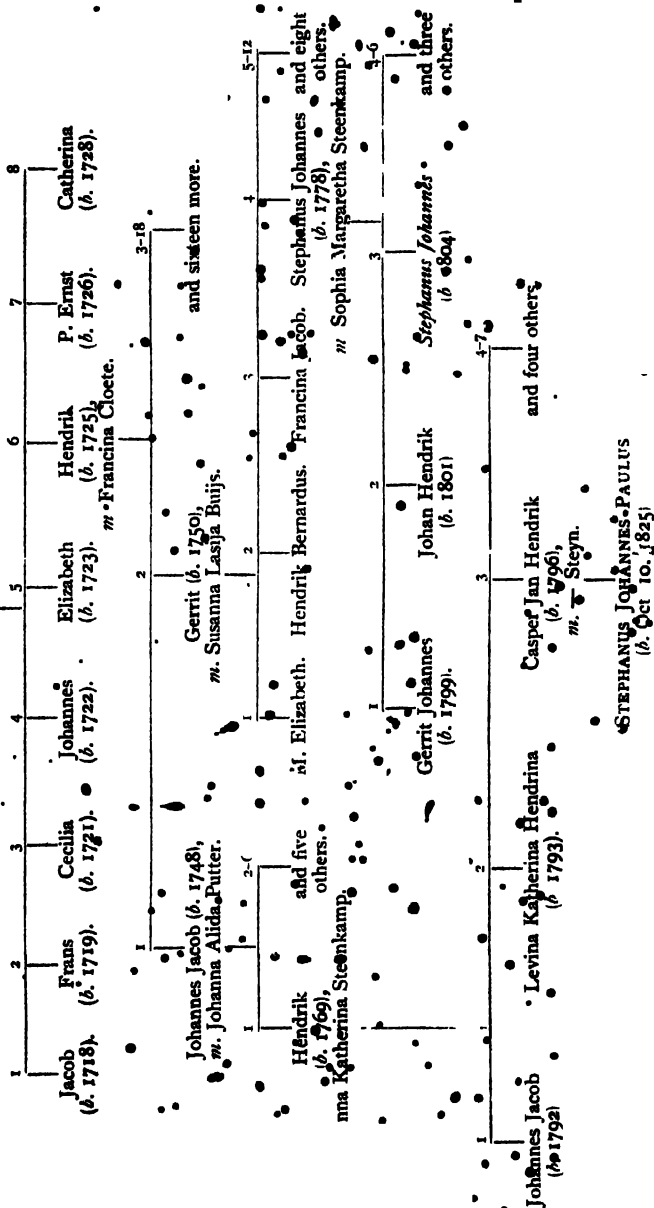
The descent of names in the old Afrikaner families follows very much the rule of skipping a generation. Thus Hendrik, the great-grandson of the founder of the family, was named after Hendrik, sixth son of that founder, while the later Hendrik's father, Johannes Jacob, preserved the name of his grandfather, his own name being repeated in his grandson (eldest son of the later Hendrik), Johannes Jacob. The later Hendrik's second child was a daughter (Levina Catherina Hendrina, born in 1793), while his second son, born in 1796, was Casper Jan Hendrik, who bore a name that appears frequently in the Steenkamp family, to which his mother belonged. Casper (or Kaspar), who was a well-to-do man at the time of the great migration, married a member of the Steyn family, which has recently given a President to the Orange Free State. From this union sprang Stephanus Paulus Johannes Krüger, now President of the South African Republic, who was born at Colesberg on the 10th of October, 1825. Paul Kruger, however, was not the eldest in the family;

* Van der Loo, in his "History of the Transvaal," makes the date the 25th of October. As, however, the 10th is the date on which the President's birthday is officially celebrated, it may be presumed that it is correct.

he had at least a sister, some six years older than himself, who died some time ago. But though a son of Casper Jan Hendrik Kruger, his name of Stephanus Johannes evidently came from the branch of the family sprung from Gerrit Kruger, brother of the first Johannes Jacob, and son of the first Hendrik. Gerrit's fourth child and second son was named Stephanus Johannes, and he married, as has been stated, Sophia Margaretha Steenkamp, his third son being also named Stephanus Johannes. It will be understood, therefore, that in giving the name of Stephanus Johannes, with Paul added, to a son of Casper Jan Hendrik Kruger, a compliment was paid both to Krugers and Steenkamps. Paul Kruger's mother, it may be added, died when he was quite a child, before the occurrence of the great migration. His father died in 1852, and was buried on a farm in the Magaliesberg, in the Transvaal, now occupied by one of Paul Kruger's sons.

The movements of the Potgieter party are of the highest interest for several reasons, chief among which must be placed the fact that it was by this party that the first foundations of the two Republics of South Africa were laid. Their progress, too, was more gradual, their adventures were more inspiring than those of the parties which had preceded them in the march. The Triebhard and van Rensburg parties seem to have

Jacob Kruger III. (1717) Johanna Kemp.



hurried on towards the tropical or semi-tropical country that now forms the north-eastern districts of the Transvaal. The Potgieter party were more disposed to study the resources of the Free State. Their course was directed past the mountain of Thaba 'Nchu, a most remarkable and isolated elevation some forty miles to the eastward of Bloemfontein, the Free State capital. Thence they proceeded onwards to the site of the present Free State town of Winburg, on the banks of the Vet River—a river now known to travellers as one of the regular sources of water-supply for the locomotives working the Johannesburg traffic on the Free State railways. There the wanderers found a remnant of the Bataung tribe living under the chief Makwana, who claimed as his right the whole country between the Vet and Vaal Rivers. His right, however, was in serious jeopardy from the superior power of Mozilikatze, the chief of the Matabele, by whom the whole country had recently been laid waste. Makwana saw only too plainly the value of the assistance that could be secured for himself if he entered into a league with the new arrivals. Upon condition, therefore, of being protected from the Matabele, he concluded an arrangement with Potgieter's party by virtue of which all the land between the Vet and Vaal Rivers was ceded to them with the exception

only of a limited tract which he reserved for the use of his own people.

On this occasion, as on others, the farmers showed a confidence in the position which was far from being justified. The arrangement once concluded, they spread themselves in security over the vacant territory, some of them even crossing the Vaal River and moving down its right bank as far as its junction with the Mooi, on the banks of which the pretty town of Potchefstroom, named partly after Potgieter, now stands. Save for the ill-fated exploration of the Triefhard and van Rensburg parties, the country northward from the Vaal to the Limpopo was to the emigrant farmers an unknown land. A few English travellers or traders had penetrated into it, always taking care to visit the chief kraal of Mozilikatze, then some hundred miles east of the modern town of Zeerust, with the object of propitiating him with presents. It would have been well for themselves, perhaps, if the emigrant farmers had observed the same custom. In May, 1836, a considerable party, including the commandant Hendrik Potgieter, started on a journey of discovery which took them as far as Triefhard's camp in the Zoutpansberg district. Although they did not carry out their original intention of inspecting the route to Delagoa Bay, they saw and heard enough to convince them

of the value and convenience of that port to the settlements they proposed establishing in what is now the central portion of the Transvaal; indeed, it may be said that the political and commercial connection between the South African Republic and Delagoa Bay had its origin at this very date. The party of inspection had set out in May. On the 2nd of September they were once more at the site of the camp whence they had started. Arriving, they were greeted with terrible news. The Matabele, incensed at the intrusion into their country of strangers who failed to show the usual respect for their king, had fallen upon and massacred two separate hunting parties, wiped out an entire family of the Liebenbergs, and driven off nearly the whole of the emigrants' cattle.

These sad misfortunes, however, were not altogether without their compensations, for a small party of the emigrants, who were warned just in time, succeeded in repulsing, with heavy loss, a powerful division of the Matabele army, which, during a battle of six hours, vainly endeavoured to force their way within the laagered wagons. There seems little reason to doubt that Paul Kruger, then a boy not yet eleven years of age, was present during this conflict, and there can be less doubt that, even at so early an age, he was well able to take an active part in the work of

defence. Indeed, when girls and women bravely played their part in loading the guns, the boys could hardly reckon themselves as other than fighting-men.¹

It became evident to the farmers that, if they were to preserve themselves and their families alive, they must adopt defensive tactics. Accordingly, as soon as the Matabele had withdrawn, they concentrated themselves at a spot now known as Vechtkop, in the Free State, situated between the Rhenoster and Wilge Rivers. There they constructed a formidable laager, consisting of some fifty wagons drawn up in a circle and firmly lashed together, every opening being filled up with thorn-trees, and there they awaited that attack of the Matabele which they felt convinced, after what had passed, must come. In the latter part of October they were warned that the Matabele army was approaching. At once a mounted force rode out to meet their assailants. Firing a volley at close quarters, the farmers checked the Matabele advance, and having retired to reload their guns, again came forward to meet the still advancing foe. By these tactics—tactics which were successfully

Mr. Bryce, in his recently published book, "Impressions of South Africa,"—a book which is in many respects misleading—speaks of the emigrant farmers as having "pounced upon Mosilikatze." It should be clear that the "pouncing" was quite in the opposite direction.

employed on subsequent occasions—considerable loss was inflicted on the Matabele at the start, while time was gained for the completion of the preparations within the laager. The assault on the laager, however, could not be indefinitely delayed. Five thousand Matabele, accustomed to find themselves invincible, rushed upon the fortifications defended by less than fifty grown men. The lads once more, with young Paul Kruger among them, took their places with the men, while the women and girls devolved the duty of reloading the empty guns handed down to them. A cloud of assegais was hurled into the laager, from which, however, marvellous as it may seem, only two of the defenders lost their lives. In less than an hour the Matabele drew off, having lost more than 150 men killed outright, but carrying away with them all the flocks and herds of the farmers, amounting to 100 horses, 4,600 oxen, and more than 50,000 sheep. The farmers, though victorious, were left, owing to the loss of their cattle, in a perilous position, and had it not been for the succour afforded by the advent of a third party of emigrants, under the leadership of Mr. Gerrit Maritz—subsequently one of the founders of the Republic (now the Colony) of Natal—they would beyond all doubt have been reduced to a desperate condition.

It is not the intention here to dwell at length

on the earlier struggles of the founders of the two South African Republics—the layers of the foundations of civilisation in the greater part of the South African continent. It will be enough if we are enabled to realise the conditions under which the young Paul Kruger grew up, and the species of training to which, by force of circumstances, he was subjected. Those circumstances were of a kind that gave special value to powers of physical strength and endurance, unfailing courage, and capacity for quick decision in any situation that might arise. It is difficult, except through means of anecdotes which possibly are more or less apocryphal, to obtain any clear knowledge of the actualities of Paul Kruger's youth. Those anecdotes, a good many of which have found a place in Mr. Poultney Bigelow's book, "White Man's Africa," all bear testimony both to the courage and the physical powers of one who now, even in his seventy-third year, is unmistakably, in respect both of physical and moral force, one of the most remarkable men of this century. The history of the next ten or fifteen years in both the Free State and the Transvaal was the history of a continual struggle, carried on from month to month and from year to year; through every kind of danger and privation, sometimes with the power of savage chiefs, sometimes with the agents and

forces of the British Government, repentant that it had, like Pharaoh, let the people go. The tragedy at Dingaan's Kraal, when the gallant Piet Retief and more than sixty members of leading Afrikaner families were treacherously massacred; the massacre of settlers in Natal; the revenge taken at the battle of the Blood River, on the northern border of Zululand, where, on the 16th of December, 1838, some four or five hundred farmers, under Andries Pretorius completely defeated between twelve and fifteen thousand Zulus; the extension of British authority over the newly founded Republic of Natal, with its exciting incidents; the annexation of the Free State, leading to the severely contested action between the farmers and the British troops at Boomplaats—all these are landmarks in the history of the years between the starting of the "Great Trek" and the recognition of the South African Republic as an independent State by the document known as the Sand River Convention.

During this period the life of Paul Kruger was exactly the life, and none other, of the generation to which he belonged. The esteem in which he was held by his fellow-burgers is brought out by the fact that at the age of seventeen he was elected Assistant Field-cornet of the district in which he lived, becoming Field-cornet, or local magistrate

and chief military officer of his ward, three years later. It was while holding this post that he took part, as commandant of a force of 150 men, in the expedition against the chief Sechele in 1852, holding a similar command in connection with the expedition against Montsoia in the following year. In the meantime, as a hunter, he had thoroughly explored Matabeleland as far north as the Zambezi, and it seems not improbable that the knowledge he then acquired of the country rendered him all the more willing to relinquish it to the Chartered Company. If the burghers of the Transvaal had thought that country worth having, they would have had it long before Messrs. Rudd and Rhodes thought of securing their concession from Lo Bengula. During all this time, and indeed throughout his life, he was never known to be ill, unless with fever, while his stirring adventures both in war and in the hunting-field might well form the basis of a thrilling romance. Through all these adventures he has never been wounded, though his clothes have often been perforated by assegais or bullets—a fact which doubtless has induced the belief among natives that he is invulnerable.

It would be impossible, however, to make a correct estimate of Paul Kruger's character without according due importance to the strong

religious feeling by which it is penetrated. That this religious feeling takes a shape which was better known in the England of a century ago, the England of the Methodist revival, than in the England of to-day, detracts nothing from its value. If Paul Kruger regards himself as specially guided and protected by a supernatural Power, the very same thing is to be said of John Newton, the friend of Cowper, who, beginning his career as the captain of a slaver, ended it as the venerated rector of one of London's most noted churches. The world, the English world, has become so cynical and sceptical at this close of the nineteenth century, that it forgets the estimation accorded to the leading lights of evangelical religion at the close of the eighteenth. The faith of these leaders of the evangelical school came to them always through severe personal struggle, which in the end refined their natures and kindled their enthusiasm. It was precisely the same with Paul Kruger. A time came, when he was about five-and-twenty years of age, when the strength of his inward conflict—the conflict of newly aroused religious sensibilities with the instincts and impulses of a young man possessed of no ordinary vital force—literally drove him into the wilderness, where he disappeared for some little time, returning thence a man of deep and earnest religious

convictions. The acknowledgment of these convictions, and their public illustration and enunciation, has been a habit of his life ever since, and every one who knows Pretoria knows the church opposite the Presidency, wherein upon almost every Sunday Paul Kruger may be found employing both eloquence and earnestness in throwing the light of his own personal experiences on the lessons of the only book which he cares to read. It is necessary to keep this side of his character in view, remembering that, however antiquated his views may seem to the children of the present generation, with him they engage and absorb the whole earnestness of his being. It does not always happen that an evident earnestness in respect of religious matters is associated with sincerity or ability in politics. Nevertheless, in Mr. Gladstone the people of Great Britain have before them an example which may help them to acquire a warmer appreciation of Paul Kruger.

The moment when Paul Kruger began to occupy a prominent place in the eyes of his fellow-burgers was a moment of change. The emigrant farmers, after sixteen years of struggle and uncertainty, had, in 1852, secured the recognition of their independent rights, in the signing of the Sand River Convention, the accomplishment of this desired end serving to throw a gracious and gladdening light

upon the last days of the two most distinguished leaders—Hendrik Potgieter and Andries Pretorius—of that most historic movement which resulted in the reclamation and civilisation of the South African continent as it is known to-day. After some years of a bitter personal antagonism—neither apostles nor pilgrim fathers have always been perfect in their tempers—followed at last by a reconciliation, both these men of daring and endurance had died in the same year—Potgieter in March, 1853, and Pretorius in the following July. Whenever South Africa produces an historical painter, the scene round the death-bed of Andries Pretorius—the old, well-tried leader, dying from a lingering disease, exhorting his countrymen to faith and unity, while native chiefs bent with tears to kiss his hand—will form one of that painter's noblest subjects, and his work will serve better than all the books ever written as an answer to those who have so ceaselessly slandered a brave, humane, and law-abiding people.

CHAPTER III

PAÛL KRUGER AND THE REPUBLIC

THE Sand River Convention, by which the independence of the South African Republic was recognised and guaranteed, was signed on the 17th of January, 1852, and finally ratified on the 13th of May in the same year. A further recognition of the rights of the emigrant farmers took place two years later, when the British Government finally retired from the Orange Free State. The views of the British Government on the general situation in South Africa were officially expressed by the Duke of Newcastle, then Colonial Secretary, on the 10th of March, 1854, to Messrs. Fraser and Murray, who, as representatives of certain British residents in the Free State, had been sent to England to protest against the British abandonment of the country. In the Duke of Newcastle's opinion, embodying doubtless the opinion of his colleagues in the Ministry, the Queen's authority had been extended too far in South Africa. It was impossible, he said,

for England to supply troops to defend constantly advancing outposts, especially as Capetown and the port of Table Bay were all she really required in South Africa.

It is worth while to recall this official expression of opinion, more especially because when, some seven-and-twenty years later, the same view was put forward in South Africa, it was very widely denounced as something impracticable or even seditious. The adoption of this policy, it may be pointed out, coincided approximately with the grant to the two British Colonies in South Africa—the Cape of Good Hope and Natal—of what was doubtless, under all the circumstances, a very liberal form of constitution, though a constitution falling short of the full powers of responsible government. The adoption of this policy, moreover, had further results, some doubtless expected. It left the Republics free to govern themselves without fear of interference. But, while removing all fear of such interference, it had the result—a result perhaps not altogether expected—of creating divisions within the Republics themselves, and particularly in the Transvaal. It was no doubt the case then, as it has been in later times, that what was necessary to bind the people of the Republics together was pressure from without. Left to themselves; and in the absence of any necessity of resisting a common

enemy, the burghers became divided, personal predilections or family rivalries standing in the way of united and patriotic action.

These divisions manifested themselves in three distinct ways—first, in the prolongation into another generation of the old rivalry between Hendrik Potgieter and Andries Pretorius; next, in the conflicting interests of different districts; and thirdly, in the quarrels that arose over ecclesiastical matters. The territorial disputes naturally followed to a large extent geographical indications. Thus the burghers in the Lydenburg and adjacent districts, constituting the eastern half of the Republic, did not feel themselves at all bound to respect the views of the burghers in the western half of the Republic, consisting of the Potchefstroom and Rustenburg districts. In the meantime the circumstances of the case had brought into existence a strong and intelligent party, which, under the leadership of Mr. Marthinus Wessels Pretorius, son of Commandant-General Andries Pretorius, recognised the necessity for a strong central government and the establishment of a capital in some spot which should be fairly accessible from both the eastern and western districts of the Republic. It was with this view that, through the intervention of Mr. Pretorius, two farms were purchased in a central position for the founding of the township and town.

of Prétoria. Animated by the same regard for unity and order, the same party urged the advisability of adopting some such settled constitution as had been adopted by the Free State—a proposal to which various objections were urged by those who were in favour of the establishment of district councils. The lines of the religious split coincided very nearly with those of the political disagreement, so that, to use the words of Dr. Theal, “one side was in favour of a single government, with subordinate district courts of law and a church independent of foreign control, while the other side favoured district legislative councils allied for the purposes of defence and a church connected with the Cape synod.”¹

It was with the Pretorius party that Paul Kruger allied himself, his course possibly being to some extent decided by his predilection for the Church which most appealed to his strongly marked religious views. Beyond this, too, his interests were centred in Rustenburg, in the western division of the Republic, which, by reason of its earlier settlement, regarded itself as possessed of some right of shaping the future politics of the country. It was not long before this division of feeling led to serious trouble. At meetings summoned in the latter part of 1856 by Mr. M. W. Pretorius, who was now Commandant-

¹ “History of South Africa,” vol. v. (1854-1872) p. 33.

General in the Potchefstroom and Rustenburg districts, where these meetings were held, a large majority declared themselves in favour of the adoption of a constitution. Representatives, one from each field-cometcy, assembled at Potchefstroom in December of the same year to frame the constitution. The constitution adopted provided for the establishment of a legislature, named the qualifications for its members and their manner of election and retirement. It also provided for a President and an Executive Council, for a single Commandant-General to be elected by the burghers of the whole Republic, for the division of the Republic into convenient districts, for the raising of a revenue, for ecclesiastical organisation, for a free press, for the prohibition of slavery, and for the submission of all foreign treaties to the decision of the Volksraad. At a further meeting, Commandant-General Pretorius was elected President, and, with a special view to conciliating the people of the eastern portion of the Republic, Stephanus Schoeman, of Zoutpansberg, who had done good service in a native war a few years previously, was elected Commandant-General of the whole Republic.

This conciliatory step, however, entirely failed of its effect. The people of Zoutpansberg and Lydenburg indignantly repudiated the acts of the representative assembly at Potchefstroom, and Schoeman

declined to accept the post offered to him. So far, indeed, from doing so, he joined with other leading residents in the eastern Transvaal in drawing up a manifesto disowning the new constitution and everything connected with it. Each side took steps to strengthen itself against the other. President Pretorius proceeded to Bloemfontein in the hope of inducing the Free State to join the Transvaal, in which case the influence of the malcontents would be swamped. The burghers of the eastern districts declared those districts independent, under the title of the Republic of Lydenburg, and defined its boundaries by proclamation. This was a bold step, and the position of the Schoeman party was strengthened by a serious mistake made by President Pretorius when in Bloemfontein. Presuming upon his position as heir of the late Commandant-General Andries Pretorius, he sent a message to the Basuto chief, Moshesh, inviting him to a conference at Bloemfontein. In high resentment the Free State Volksraad gave Mr. Pretorius and his companion twenty-four hours' notice to leave the country, while those persons in the Free State who had favoured his views were charged with sedition. As a result notice was sent from Potchefstroom to Bloemfontein that, unless this charge of sedition was withdrawn in eight days, a Transvaal commando would invade the Free State.

The commando started, Mr. Pretorius placing himself at its head, and having as one of his subordinate officers Commandant (as he then was) Paul Kruger. The position was a singular one; for not only were the burghers of the two Republics in open hostility against each other, but Commandant-General Schoeman, who had refused the office of Commandant-General for the whole Republic, sent a message to Bloemfontein offering to join the Free State in an alliance against Pretorius. The two commandos came face to face on the banks of the Rhenoster River, a little to the south of the Vaal, on the 25th of May, 1857. On both sides there was a genuine unwillingness to commence actual hostilities, which would have involved a conflict in many cases between members of the same family. Recognising this element in the situation, and feeling himself to be weaker than he had anticipated, Mr. Pretorius despatched Paul Kruger with a flag of truce to propose a conference for the consideration of a pacific settlement. The proposal was at once agreed to. Twelve representatives were appointed on each side, Paul Kruger, now in his thirty-second year, being among them. An agreement was drawn up, which really partook largely of the nature of a treaty of alliance, and though some of the Free State burghers who had favoured Transvaal claims were visited with severe

penalties, these penalties were, at the instance of a deputation from the Transvaal, of which Paul Kruger was the leading member, afterwards mitigated.

The year 1858 opened with an incident that again brought the name of Paul Kruger to the front. The Bamapela, one of the powerful native tribes in the Zoutpansberg district, who had risen in 1854, again tried their strength against the white man, their attempt beginning, as has so often happened in South Africa, with the murder of Europeans and the seizure of their property. A strong force was at once called out by Commandant-General Schoeman, who still held office in the Lydenburg and Zoutpansberg districts, while a force of burghers, under command of Commandant Paul Kruger, was despatched from the Rustenburg district to aid in suppressing the common enemy. The insurgents having retired to a fortified hill, their position was attacked and stormed by Commandant Kruger's division, with the loss of one burgher killed and several wounded. This action effectually disposed of the revolt, which was used as a justification for imposing still more stringent restrictions on any sale of guns or ammunition to natives.

While the political controversy between the eastern and western districts of the Republic was somewhat in a state of suspense, the religious con-

controversy was acquiring fresh interest and importance. This arose in a great measure from the arrival of Mr. Postma, a minister of the Separatist Reformed Church in Holland, the Synod of which, indeed, sent him out to South Africa, where, in November, 1858, he became clergyman at Rustenburg. As Rustenburg was the abiding-place of the Kruger family, there can be little doubt that Paul Kruger's influence had a good deal to do with this appointment. One of the chief points of difference between the Dutch Reformed Church and the Separatist Reformed Church lay in the fact that by the latter only those hymns might be used in public worship which were paraphrases of Scripture—a point of difference which remains down to the present day. In April, 1859, some attempt at a compromise between the two Churches was agreed upon. Three months later, however, the leaders of the Separatist Church rejected the arrangements for compromise, declared for the sole use of psalms and paraphrases of Scripture, repudiated any kind of appeal to the Cape Synod, and practically announced their independence. Thus the two rival Churches became established in the Transvaal, to renew from time to time the antagonism in which they originated. The Separatist Church, commonly spoken of as "the Dopper Church," of which Paul Kruger has always been a warm supporter, prides

itself on the stricter orthodoxy of its doctrines, and occupies towards the older Church very much the same position that the Free Church of Scotland occupies with regard to the Scotch Establishment.

The incidents of the next few years were such as might be expected in a country in which slumbering antagonisms were varied by partially successful attempts towards unity. After some delay the Lydenburg people agreed to consider the possibility of merging the Republic of Lydenburg in the South African Republic. Terms were agreed to, and a final respite from internal dissensions might have been secured had it not been for personal animosities and disagreements. One of the questions in the air about this time was the possible consolidation of all the Republics—the Free State, the South African Republic, and the Lydenburg Republic—into one State. The idea received little encouragement from without, Sir George Grey, who was then High Commissioner at Capetown, expressing to a Free State deputation the opinion that if the Republics united the British Government would probably annul or very seriously modify the treaties by virtue of which they were independent. It was with the view of advancing the cause of such union that, in 1860, President Pretorius visited the Free State on six months' leave of absence. This visit had a curious result, Mr. Pretorius being elected

President of the Free State in succession to President Boshof. At once his popularity in the Transvaal commenced to decline. Realising the force of Sir George Grey's warning, the Transvaal burghers began to look coldly on a union with the Free State which might imperil all the advantages they had gained through the Sand River Convention. President Pretorius, on returning from the Free State, was reminded that, under the constitution agreed to in 1857, the President of the South African Republic could hold no other office, and a demand was made on him to resign either one presidency or the other. Accordingly he resigned the presidency of the South African Republic, and took up his residence at Bloemfontein as President of the Free State.

It may fearlessly be said that the two or three years succeeding this event formed one of the most critical periods in the history of the Transvaal. Personal rivalries and personal intrigues had usurped the place of patriotism and regard for the public welfare. By means of a curious shifting of the cards, Mr. Stephanus Schoeman, who now professed to be one of the staunch adherents of President Pretorius, was appointed Acting President. Schoeman, as might be gathered from his previous conduct, was a man of some considerable ability, but utterly devoid either of principle or

prudence. By the decision of a mass meeting held at Potchefstroom he had been appointed Acting President, and the Volksraad then existing had been dissolved. No sooner was he installed in office, however, than Schoeman summoned the dissolved Volksraad to reassemble, and, under protection of an armed force, instituted legal proceedings against five members of the Raad to whom had been entrusted the duty of carrying into effect the decisions of the Potchefstroom meeting. Four of these members were sentenced to pay a fine of £100 each, the fifth being let off with a fine of £15.

These extraordinary proceedings created, as might be expected, no small excitement, and Schoeman, finding his authority questioned, assembled an armed force at Pretoria for his own support. The situation had become so intolerable that nothing but decisive action on the part of some one who did not dread responsibility could alter it. The man of decisive action was found in the person of Commandant Paul Kruger, who, calling out the burghers of the Rustenburg district, resolved to drive out Schoeman from Pretoria and establish a better government. Through the intervention of influential burghers of the Pretoria district a conference was arranged, over which President Pretorius was invited to preside.

The conference decided that, above all things, a new Volksraad must be elected. When the new Volksraad assembled, it decided to dismiss Mr. Schoeman from the Acting Presidency, appointing an interim President until a new presidential election could take place.

The difficulties of the situation, however, were very far from being ended. Schoeman, refusing to submit to the decision of the Volksraad, and still having a strong party to support him, continued to exercise presidential duties. The scandal was thus created of the existence of two rival governments within the Republic. Once more Paul Kruger came to the front as the upholder of legality, and it is a remarkable testimony to the ascendancy he had already attained that, although he was only holding the rank of Commandant, two Commandant-Generals—Theunis Snyman, who had been appointed Commandant-General by the Volksraad, and Joseph van Dyk, Commandant-General of Lydenburg—volunteered to serve under him. The first step was to drive Schoeman and his party out of Pretoria. Being ousted thence, they retired to Potchefstroom, which was speedily invested by Commandant Kruger, with between 800 and 1,000 men and three pieces of artillery. Schoeman's force consisting of from three to four hundred men and one cannon. After two days

of close investment Schoeman made a sortie, which resulted in his being driven back with some loss. Thereupon, losing heart, he fled with his principal adherents into the Free State, leaving Commandant Kruger to take possession of the town of Potchefstroom. No sooner, however, had Kruger left Potchefstroom than Schoeman reappeared there, and, gathering his followers around him, was prepared to fight it out with the opposing force.

At this juncture a mediator appeared in the person of President Pretorius, through whose influence negotiations were opened up between the contending factions. It was agreed that all sentences of fines, confiscation, and banishment should be suspended, that a President and Commandant-General should be elected as soon as possible, and that all criminal charges connected with the disturbances should be dealt with by a special court created for the purpose, and presided over, if possible, by the Chief Justice of Natal. The court was ready to commence its sittings when Schoeman once more appeared in Pretoria with an armed force, and declared that, as the members of the court were his political opponents, he would refuse to recognise its decisions. For the third time Commandant Paul Kruger interfered in the cause of law and order. Forming a camp with a few of

his Rustenburg men at a little distance from Pretoria, he called on the burghers throughout the Republic to assist him in establishing order—an invitation which was widely responded to. Then, entering the town accompanied only by two unarmed burghers, he declared that, though he did not wish to shed a drop of blood, he was resolved to compel every one to submit to the law.

Paul Kruger's courage and firmness had the desired effect. Schoeman's followers became alarmed, and offered no resistance when, by Kruger's orders, a strong guard was placed over the public offices. A week later Schoeman and his associates took advantage of a heavy thunderstorm to escape from Pretoria, taking with them, however, two cannon and the State flag of the Republic. This, indeed, was the end of his endeavours after power; for, though the sentence of banishment and confiscation recorded against him was, on the intercession of President Pretorius, greatly reduced, he had lost his prestige and was declared by the Volksraad to be incapable of holding any public office. The election of a President and Commandant-General followed; but the number of votes recorded was so small that the Acting President Mr. van Rensburg, although he had received the largest number of votes, suggested that a fresh election should take place. The result of this

second election led to further disorder. Although Mr. van Rensburg was still head of the poll, with 1196 votes against 1,065 recorded for Mr. Pretorius, a number of van Rensburg's opponents declined to recognise his government on the pretext that the ballot-papers had been tampered with.

Once more, for the fourth time, it was the duty of Paul Kruger, who had been elected Commandant-General by a clear majority, to take the field in the cause of order. This time, however, his intervention was not at the outset effective. Marching on Potchefstroom, where the standard of revolt had been raised by Commandant Jan Viljoen, he found himself, with a force of only 150 men, in the presence of a force of 800, who had adopted the high-sounding name of "the Army of the People." Kruger's force was surrounded, he himself escaping into the Free State, leaving the "Army of the People" at liberty to march on Pretoria. Quickly reorganising his forces, however, Kruger got together some eight or nine hundred men, and once more took the offensive. A battle ensued on the 5th of January, 1864, in which the "Army of the People" was completely defeated and forced to disperse. The next day Mr. Pretorius again made his appearance in the capacity of mediator, his desire to mediate being rendered all the stronger

by the fact that the defeated party consisted largely of his own political supporters, whom he did not wish to see completely humbled, though acknowledging that their action in taking up arms had been wrong. Again there was a conference, eventuating in the decision to hold a fresh presidential election, at which precautions should be taken against any possibility of tampering with the voting-papers. The result of this fresh election was unmistakable. Out of 2,637 votes recorded, 1,519 were in favour of Mr. Pretorius, and 1,118 in favour of Mr. van Rensburg. On the 10th of May, 1864, when the Volksraad met, Mr. Pretorius took the oaths of office—a ceremony which marked the final termination of the civil strife that had for seven years disturbed the peace of the Republic. There can be no question that the situation was saved by the courage and decision of Paul Kruger, who thus, at the comparatively early age of thirty-nine, had established himself in a position of public esteem, second only to that held by the President himself. In the ascendancy of these two strong men the burghers of the Republic saw a prospect for the moderate and just administration of affairs, as well as a guarantee for the restoration of that public order which had been so terribly shattered by the representatives of rival personal ambitions.

It was hardly to be supposed that the general

interests of the Republic would not suffer by these untoward events. The injuries inflicted by civil strife were deep and lasting. The whole financial and administrative machinery of the country was disorganised. Beyond this, the occurrences of the years of civil disturbance had seriously damaged the South African Republic in the estimation of its neighbours, so much so that even the Orange Free State, which had once been desirous of union with its northern neighbour, now preferred to stand alone. Again, the conflict between sections of the European population had exercised a very injurious effect on the large native population, who found an opportunity for unruliness in the quarrels of the superior race. Several tribes had become practically independent. No control had been exercised over them, and no taxes had been paid by them for several years. In consequence of this, attempts to restore the authority of the Government met with considerable resistance. The Lydenburg district had been in a state of dire disorder for some time past owing to a war between two rival chiefs, the European inhabitants being obliged to seek the protection of laagers. Towards the end of 1863 a commando was sent from Pretoria to deal with these contending chiefs, but was withdrawn owing to the revolt of Commandant Viljoen. One of the first steps of President Pretorius, when finally

elected to office, was to despatch a strong force to the Lydenburg district to deal with the disturbers of the peace. Meantime, however, the problem was solved by the Swazies, who, attacking Mapoch, one of the contending chiefs, routed him completely, proceeding afterwards to all but annihilate the tribe of the other combatant, Malewu. . . .

The relations between the Republic and the Zulus, moreover, gave some trouble, though it would be strangely incorrect to assert that there was at any time a state of actual hostility between the Zulus and the Transvaal burghers. Panda, who had been installed King of Zululand by the farmers after the final defeat and flight of the treacherous Dingaan, was in no sense an inheritor of the military ambition of his predecessors. Some uneasiness was caused both in the South African Republic and in Natal when, in 1856, the terrible conflict arose between Cetywayo and Umbulazi, the two most ambitious of Panda's sons. The result of this conflict was, that Cetywayo, even while his father was alive, became practically the ruler of Zululand. From time to time disputes arose as to the exact boundaries between Zululand and the Republic, but these were always dealt with in a friendly spirit on both sides. In these negotiations Paul Kruger, in his capacity as Commandant-General, took a prominent part. The preservation

of these friendly relations between the Zulus and the Republic—relations in every respect creditable to both sides—furnishes a convincing argument against the stereotyped fiction started at the time of the annexation of the Transvaal, to the effect that the Transvaal burghers lived in perpetual fear of being wiped out of existence by a Zulu army, thirsting to be avenged for wrongs received at the hands of the Republic. The friendly feelings of the Zulus towards the Republic were never better or more clearly manifested than when, in 1865, Cetywayo moved his army away from the Utrecht border to show that he had no hostile intentions, and left the Pretoria Government at liberty to send reinforcements to assist the Free State burghers in their severe conflict with the Basutos. The force despatched, under Commandant-General Paul Kruger, to take part in the campaign against the Basutos, numbered nearly a thousand men, and rendered most material assistance, especially at the battle at Cathcart's Drift, on the Caledon River, in which the Basutos were completely defeated, leaving great numbers of cattle, sheep, and horses as a spoil to the victors. Had the Transvaal force been able to remain longer in the Free State, no doubt other important services would have been rendered. The state of affairs, however, in the Zoutpansberg district was in need of attention, and the force under

Kruger was recalled to the Transvaal after a month's absence.

The anxiety with regard to affairs in the Zoutpansberg district arose mainly from two causes—the feuds between native chiefs and the presence of degraded and disorderly Europeans. Prior to the arrival of Europeans, the district had been over and over again the scene of desolating native wars, in which the original inhabitants had been all but exterminated. Lying as it did in the extreme north-eastern corner of the South African Republic, Zoutpansberg naturally became the refuge of all who had any reason for keeping out of the way of the law, while the control over their actions was so slight that they could live very much as they pleased. Still, the elements of civilisation were not wanting. The village of Schoemansdal, named after Stephanus Schoeman and situated just within the tropics, was the chief centre of the ivory and feather trade, carried on by parties of hunters who penetrated far into the interior. It had so far advanced as to be able to boast a magistrate, a resident pastor, a church, and a parsonage, forming a sort of island of order in the midst of a sea of anarchy. In 1864 acute trouble arose through the conduct of a turbulent petty chief named Monene, who, having offended the powerful chief

Umzila, occupying the country to the north of Delagoa Bay, took refuge in the territory of the South African Republic.

As a temporary measure, President Pretorius, who visited the district in 1864, placed Monene, who complained that his life was threatened by allies of Umzila, under the charge of the magistrate at Schoemansdal. It was not long, however, before Monene was the cause of further trouble. Charged with some offence, he escaped from custody, and took refuge first with one and then with another native chief. A party of lawless Europeans proceeded to search for him, and, finding that he had been sheltered by a chief named Pago, attacked that chief, killed nearly a hundred of his people, and carried off cattle, women, and children. This led to acts of retaliation by other chiefs, who committed so much devastation that by November, 1865, when President Pretorius again visited the district, the European inhabitants were in laager, business and farming were at a standstill, and a large number of houses in the very outskirts of Schoemansdal had been burnt down. President Pretorius and Commandant-General Kruger did their utmost to promote harmony, but found, on returning to Pretoria, that there was present with the burghers a great unwillingness to raise a force for the restoration of order. They

PAUL KRUGER AND THE REPUBLIC 65

were averse both to assisting native tribes against each other and to assisting lawless whites who had brought their troubles on themselves. The financial difficulties of the Republic, moreover, which had arisen out of the period of civil disturbance, formed an additional obstacle. A call for a commando of twelve hundred men, issued in June, 1866, did not result in the assembling of even half that number, and as pressure upon the European population of Zoutpansberg was somewhat relieved by the quarrels of the natives among themselves, the force was speedily disbanded.

In the early part of 1867, however, the natives once more combined to attack the Europeans, and President Prétorius at once called for a force of two thousand men. Only some five hundred put in an appearance in answer to the summons, and with this force Commandant-General Kruger proceeded to Zoutpansberg. There he found the state of things so serious, and the attitude of the native chiefs, so menacing, that he made an urgent appeal to the country to support him with 1,500 men and a proper supply of ammunition. The appeal, however, was unheeded. To make matters worse, the Europeans concerned in the attack on the chief Pago, being sentenced by the magistrates of the district to pay a heavy fine, were rescued by a band of lawless comrades who set the authorities at defiance. Under

these circumstances Kruger, with the assent of his Council of War, resolved to abandon Schoemansdal, the respectable portion of the population retiring with his force.

For this retirement Kruger has in some quarters been severely blamed. It is, however, difficult to see what other course was open to him. The force under his command was utterly inadequate to restore order, the revolt of Europeans against authority having produced far more serious complications than any that could arise from any action by native chiefs only. Besides this, his communications with Pretoria were liable, if he suffered any reverse, to be seriously interrupted by powerful chiefs who commanded the line of march. That the abandonment of Schoemansdal was a severe blow to the Republic there can be no doubt, but the responsibility surely rests rather with the people generally, who failed to provide sufficient force, than with the commander, who found himself, in spite of his urgent appeals and representations, too weak to deal with the situation before him. That Kruger did nothing in this matter to forfeit the general confidence of the people is clearly proved by the manner in which, ten years later, he was looked to as the fittest person to plead with the British Government the cause of the annexed Republic. A few months later, being put in command of a sufficient force, owing to his

renewed appeals to the people and to the Volksraad, he had succeeded in so disposing of the most hostile of the chiefs as to have prevented an abandonment of the whole of the Zoutpansberg district, while the subsequent disagreements of other chiefs among themselves tended to the greater security of the Europeans who, in spite of disturbance and fever, still held on to their farms.

The next three or four years found Mr. Kruger engaged in more than one important commission for the settlement of the boundaries of the Republic. Thus in 1869 he was a member of the commission to settle the boundary between the Republic and the Portuguese territories to the eastward, the settlement having the important result of an amendment of the Transvaal constitution in favour of perfect freedom of worship to all residents. In January, 1870, he was a member of the commission for the settlement of the boundary with the Free State, while in the following month he visited Zululand for the purpose of arriving at a clearer agreement as to the Zulu frontier. Later in the same year he was the most important member of a commission charged with the duty of coming to an understanding with the chief Montsioa with regard to the western frontier.

A new era, however, was dawning on South Africa. The discovery of the diamond-fields of

Griqualand West had brought British statesmen round to the conclusion that the views stated by the Duke of Newcastle in 1854 were erroneous, and that South Africa was of more importance to Great Britain than could be expressed by the mere maintenance of a hold upon Capetown and Table Bay. The change in feeling was first officially indicated in despatches from Lord Kimberley in the latter part of 1870 in which he deprecated any extension of the rule of the Republics, which, in his opinion, "would open to the Boers an extended field for their slave-dealing" operations, and probably lead to much oppression of the natives and disturbance of peace." It was out of the question of the ownership of the diamondiferous districts that arose the dispute leading up to what is known as "the Keate Award," and it was owing to the dissatisfaction felt in the South African Republic with the way in which the case for the Republic in respect of the dispute had been prepared and submitted that led President Pretorius to resign his office. Mr. D. J. Erasmus, the oldest member of the Executive, was appointed by the Volksraad to act as President till a new presidential election could be held. There was a strong desire on the part of many of the Transvaal burghers to secure the services of Mr. Brand, President of the Free State, and thus, probably, to unite the two Republics. Mr. Brand,

however, was too cautious a man to place himself in a position which might bring himself and the Free State into collision with the British Government, in whose eyes, he urged, adopting the view expressed by Sir George Grey some years previously, the union of the Republics would appear as a menace.

Disappointed of Mr. Brand, and filled with the conviction that they must have a clever man at the head of affairs, the burghers of the South African Republic fixed their eyes on the Rev. Thomas François Burgers, a Dutch clergyman of considerable education and very advanced theological views, who had been prominently before the public in connection with his appeal against his suspension from office on the ground of heresy. For this reason it might have been thought that Mr. Burgers would be the very last person in the world in whom the strictly orthodox people of the Republic would seek to find a political leader. Impressed, however, by his energy, and filled with the conviction that a clever President was a necessity of their position, they overruled their religious scruples, and elected Mr. Burgers President by a large majority. On the 1st of July, 1872, he took the Presidential baths, and thus commenced a new chapter of Transvaal history which was destined to close in the most direful disaster.

CHAPTER IV

KRUGER AND THE ANNEXATION

THE election of Mr. Burgers to the Presidency of the South African Republic meant a good deal more than, in all probability, most of his supporters imagined. The Republic, by virtue of his election, emerged from the obscurity in which it had rested since the signing of the Sand River Convention in 1852, and began to attract attention both in Great Britain and in the European continent generally. Naturally this was largely the result of the increased interest felt in South African affairs through the discovery of the diamond-fields—a discovery whose importance was backed up by the discovery of goldfields in the Transvaal. It was the diamond discoveries that induced the British Government to go back upon the Duke of Newcastle's declaration in 1854 and to adopt a more active policy in respect of South Africa; and it was in connection with this recrudescence of activity that Mr. Burgers, as the newly installed Presiden

of the Transvaal, made his first endeavour to prove to his supporters that they had elected the right man.

The nature of this endeavour is to be found very clearly indicated in the correspondence that passed, in 1874, between President Burgers and Sir Henry Barkly, then High Commissioner at Capetown, with regard to the Keate Award. The nature of the questions involved in this award can be described in a few words. Owing to the discovery of diamonds along and near the course of the Vaal River, it was thought highly desirable, first in Capetown and afterwards in London, that the diamondiferous districts should be brought under the control of the Cape Colony, as the strongest power in South Africa. The difficulty in the way of this operation lay in the fact that these districts belonged of right to the Free State or the South African Republic, and had long been occupied by burghers of those two States. There are, however, more ways than one of arriving at a desired end. In this case the means to the end in view were found in the revival of certain old claims by the Griqualand chief Nicholas Waterboer, who some years previously had had these claims disallowed by a court of arbitration. The whole story is long and involved, the point of importance being that, Waterboer having ceded his claims to the British

Government, the British Government pushed the matter as its own. So far as the Free State was concerned, the dispute resulted in the cutting off of the diamondiferous districts from that State, which accepted a sum of £90,000 as compensation. The claims with regard to the territory of the South African Republic were made the subject of arbitration, in which Mr. Keate, then Governor of Natal, acted as final referee. It was the neglect of the Pretoria Government to get up its case that led to an award in the highest degree adverse to the South African Republic, and, by reason of the public dissatisfaction, to the resignation of President Pretorius. The award, which cut off from the Transvaal large districts that had for years been in European occupation, was never really acted upon, though Mr. Keate's decision was, some years afterwards, as will be seen, revived against the Republic.

The general conviction in the Republic was that the award, ought, if a fair excuse could be found, to be repudiated, and before Mr. Burgers had been very long in office he entered into correspondence with Sir Henry Barkly on this subject. President Burgers' final reply, dated in August, 1874, sets forth with much ability the grounds for this conviction, which may be enumerated as (1) the want

* Printed as a pamphlet at Capetown in 1874.

of authority on the part of the representatives of the Transvaal ; (2) the want of decision in the deed of submission ; (3) partiality on the part of one of the arbitrators as well as on the part of the final referee, Mr. Keate ; (4) the want of parties to the deed of submission ; and (5) the want of finality in the award. President Burgers, in the document in question—a document that in print fills 116 octavo pages—certainly expressed himself with vigour, if not with clearness, his language at times seeming to go beyond the usual limits of diplomatic intercourse. Regarded from a wider point of view, President Burgers' despatch indicates very clearly the strained nature of the relations that were beginning to subsist between the South African Republic and the British Government, and it might be supposed, even if there were not public documents in confirmation, that Sir Henry Barkly would not be at any particular trouble, either then or afterwards, to represent the Transvaal Government in a favourable light to the authorities at the Colonial Office in London.

That the burghers of the Transvaal had, in Mr. Burgers, got hold of a vigorous President there can be no doubt, and for the time this was calculated to satisfy them. Beyond this, moreover, commercial and educated men were attracted by the evidence afforded of his progressive views.

Having received a high-class education at the Dutch University at Utrecht, and understanding the economical value of the railway as a factor in commercial and agricultural development, the two chief articles in his political creed were the establishment of a liberal system of education and the securing of the commercial independence of the country by the building of the Delagoa Bay railway. For the furtherance of these two objects he undertook a journey to Europe, and especially to Holland, towards the close of the year 1874, leaving Mr. Piet Joubert Acting President in his absence. It was to Holland that Mr. Burgers, not unnaturally, looked for men of ability and capital who might be serviceable to the Republic. One result of his visit to Holland was the securing of the services of Dr. E. J. P. Jorissen, who now holds the position of one of the judges of the Transvaal High Court. Dr. Jorissen, whose subsequent services to the Republic were most valuable and whose recently published "Reminiscences" form an important addition to Transvaal history, was engaged to fill certain high educational offices; but, having been warned that his advanced theological views would render any contact with educational matters undesirable, turned his atten-

"Transvaalsche Herinneringen," published in Holland in 1897.

tion to law, and ultimately accepted the office of State Attorney, which happened to be vacant.

The mission of President Burgers to Holland seemed, so far as surface results went, to be attended with success. He succeeded in securing the services of several men of culture and education, and in making arrangements towards the construction of the Delagoa Bay railway, which shortly resulted in the delivery of a large quantity of railway material at Lourenço Marques. There was, however, a weakness in his character and a weakness in his position which were bound, sooner or later, to make their influence felt. The weakness in his position arose from the fact that, as time went on, he was less and less trusted by the rural population of the Transvaal, who constituted then, as they do now, the overruling element in the country. It is one of the peculiarities of South Africa that the population of the towns and the population of the country know very little of each other. Not being able to realise the large population which, in so large a country, may live in the most scattered manner, the inhabitants of the towns acquire the habit of believing that they are the important factor in the country. A good corrective to this mistake is to be found, in the Transvaal especially, in the size of the village churches. In apparently insignificant townships will be found

large and expensively built churches—Heidelberg and Standerton, on the route from Natal to Johannesburg, may be mentioned as typical cases in point—the merest corner of which would be sufficient for the local residents, but which are filled every Sunday by a farming population that, often travelling long distances, assembles from all sides.

It was this contrast between the more educated and less orthodox minority in the towns, and the less educated but more orthodox majority in the country, that to a great extent misled President Burgers as it has since his time misled many others. The minority did not trouble themselves about his heterodoxy and admired his progressive views; the majority did not care much about his progressive views, but began to be strongly suspicious of his want of orthodoxy. This suspicion gradually detached from him the sympathy and support of the agricultural majority, and led them rather to look up to a man—none other than Mr. Kruger—whose religious views were above question, and who, though unpossessed of any extensive book education, had over and over again given proofs both of courage and capacity. This as regards the weakness of Mr. Burgers' political position. His personal weakness lay in his want of "staying power," his inability doggedly to fight an uphill fight. Like many men of strong impulses and high intellectual

KRUGER AND THE ANNEXATION

gifts, he was liable to moods of discouragement and depression which, when things seemed to go against him, practically paralysed his powers of action. His want of orthodoxy, moreover, carried with it also a certain amount of political disqualification. The church to which Mr. Kruger belonged, the more evangelical body generally spoken of as the "Dopper Church," had for one of its recommendations the fact that it abjured all outside control or interference, declining, for this reason, all proposals for an administrative connection with the Dutch Reformed Church in the Cape Colony. Hence, whenever patriotic questions became involved, as they undoubtedly did through the attitude of the British Government over the Keate Award, a tendency arose among the more orthodox to regard their energetic President as tainted not merely with heterodoxy but with an insufficient regard for the independence of the Republic.

These are points which it is of importance to keep in view, because they help to explain the state of things which, a year or two later, favoured the adventure of the annexation. There can be little doubt that Mr. Kruger, whose capacity as a judge of men's characters has often been demonstrated, was perfectly aware both of the defects of President Burgers' character and of the weakness of his political position. Since Mr. Burgers' election as

successor to Pretorius, Mr. Kruger had remained perfectly loyal to his new chief, though a man more accustomed to assert himself might well have felt wounded at being passed over for the Presidency in favour of a complete stranger. What his chances of election might have been had he chosen in 1872 to come forward in opposition to Mr. Burgers, it is difficult to say. In all probability he shared to some extent the general conviction in favour of a talented President, while his natural liberality in respect of differences of religious opinion would dispose him to regard the new President's heterodoxy as forming no bar to his election, if he only proved serviceable to the State. It is certain that President Burgers held him in high esteem, and was in the habit of employing him on responsible commissions.

President Burgers was absent from South Africa for nearly eighteen months, and did not return to Pretoria till April, 1876. During his absence the relations between the South African Republic and the British Government had certainly not improved. In the preceding year Lord Carnarvon's confederation policy had taken a concrete shape. Mr. Froude had been despatched on his ineffectual mission to Capetown, while in Natal, under the direction and control of Sir Garnet Wolseley, steps had been taken of a kind favourable to Lord

Carnarvon's aims. In that year, as became known afterwards, endeavours had also been made to ascertain the willingness, or otherwise, of the two Republics to fall in with the confederation scheme, the report as regards the Transvaal being favourable. There can be no doubt that the agent who undertook the duty of inquiring, formed his conclusions entirely from what he heard in the Transvaal towns, where stories of intrigues and personal rivalries then formed, as they still form, the burden of every street corner conversation. On the assumption that the Transvaal was willing, so far, to come under the British flag, the discrediting of the Government then in office at Pretoria became a pious duty. In the meantime, coincident with the return of President Burgers, an event had occurred which was not without its significance at the time or its influence at a later date. In spite of the fact that Mr. Piet Joubert had been acting as President during Mr. Burgers' absence, the popular choice, when it came to be a question of electing a Vice-President, fell on Mr. Kruger. As an indication of the growing feeling in the country in his favour, and in favour of the principles he represented, this choice was significant. It had the effect, however, of highly incensing Mr. Joubert, who forthwith retired to his farm and kept aloof from all contact with public affairs for fully two years. In taking

note of these facts it may be found possible to trace the cause of any later rivalry that may have been apparent between Piet Joubert and Paul Kruger.

The outbreak, in 1876, of the war with Sekukuni, afforded a favourable opportunity to the officials at the Colonial Office for drawing attention to, as was alleged, the inherent weakness of the South African Republic. Those who are anxious to understand the inner history of this war, and its real scope and meaning, could hardly do better than consult the late Alfred Aylward's engrossing book, "The Transvaal of To-day." Mr. Aylward, who was personally in the thick of the whole business, graphically describes the exact origin of the war, the habits of the native tribes engaged in it, and the difficult country in which operations were carried on. Sekukuni, the chief of the Bapedi, a tribe of a Basuto stock, dominated the wild and mountainous region in the extreme north-east of the Transvaal, where he had given shelter and protection to the scattered remnants of other tribes, which had quarrelled, for the most part, with the Swazies. The country in this direction, besides being rugged in the extreme, is a fatal district to Europeans on account of the prevalence of fever. Owing to this cause, a township founded in the

"The Transvaal of To-day," by Alfred Aylward. London and Edinburgh, 1878.

Origstadt Valley was before long utterly abandoned, in some cases whole families having been swept off.

Like many conflicts between Europeans and natives in South Africa, the Sekukuni war arose from very small causes. Some molestation had been offered to white men by the followers of an unimportant chief in respect of the right to cut wood on a particular farm. A wood-cutting party of Europeans, having been turned back by these natives, complained to the local magistrate, who promptly ordered the arrest of the offenders. The officer charged with the arrest, however, failed to do his duty; the natives succeeded in defying civilised authority; and a report of their rebellion, as it was termed, was sent down to Pretoria. As it was believed that these disorderly and illegal proceedings were inspired by Sekukuni, the alarm that had been created spread rapidly, the gold-miners at Pilgrims' Rest, in the same district, calling on the Government for protection. The alarm, so far as Pretoria was concerned, was made worse by the arrival of a report, afterwards found to be untrue, that a mission station had been burned and its native population murdered. In spite of his being strongly disposed towards peace, President Burgers found himself compelled to take some kind of military action. A commando was

sent forward, which, after inflicting severe injury on the rebellious natives, retired from a country so full of terrible risks from fever. That the natives were at least seriously checked seems to be made clear by the fact that, during the retirement, only one attempt was made, by a small body of Kafirs, to molest the commando.

This event, the details of which were sedulously misrepresented, both in Capetown and in England, was looked upon as affording a proof of the helplessness and disorganisation of the Transvaal Republic—helplessness and disorganisation, it was alleged, which would sooner or later render it a prey to Kafir invasion, and thus imperil the safety and the peace of the whole of South Africa. At the same time, owing to the diligent supply of fictitious reports, the Republican Government was accused of having violated the laws of civilised warfare by the use of explosive bullets. Evidently people who were wanting in courage on one side and in humanity on the other were not people to be left in control of so large and—as was believed, though then on quite erroneous and insufficient data—so attractive a country. Warning despatches, of grave import, were addressed by Lord Carnarvon, through the mediumship of Sir Henry Barkly, to the Pretoria Government. The British Government represented itself as no less solicitous

for the welfare of the South African Republic than for the welfare of the whole of South Africa, the peace of which, it was held, might be endangered or even wrecked through the inability of Transvaal burghers to keep back the wave of native aggression. The finances of the Transvaal, moreover, were dwelt upon with deep concern. The country, it was believed, was bare of money and devoid of credit. The bank-notes issued by the Government were only worth five shillings in the pound. Commerce was practically dead. And, beyond all this, the "Boers" were violating the conditions of the Sand River Convention, by holding and trafficking in slaves.

As all well-informed persons are aware, these assertions, so confidently made in 1876, have all been subsequently disproved, the financial misrepresentation receiving its quietus at the hands of an experienced Treasury official — Sir W. B. Gurdon—when, in 1881, the conditions of the restoration of Transvaal independence were being considered by a Royal Commission in Pretoria. Owing to President Burger's, all the State bank-notes, whose value had certainly depreciated, were bought up by the Government in 1874, twenty shillings in the pound being paid for every one of them, while the accusations of slavery were effectually disposed of by the fact that, when the

annexation took place, there was not a single slave to be set at liberty. At the time, however, the persistency of these reports had its effect upon a public, both in Great Britain and in South Africa, that was not possessed of any accurate information of its own. Commercial considerations, moreover, exercised no small effect upon public opinion. If it was believed, as it largely was, in South African towns, that the submission of the Transvaal in some way to British rule, either, by confederation or otherwise, would bring about a revival and an expansion of commerce, one can hardly blame those who in England found themselves drawn to the same conclusion. It was the duty of the Ministry that had signalised its first days of office by the purchase of the Suez Canal shares, and had thus gained additional security and a firmer footing in Northern Africa, to provide for the security of South Africa by saving the Transvaal from itself.

The feeling in favour of some decisive action with regard to the South African Republic became intensified as the year 1876 went by. Possibly Lord Carnarvon's desire to score some success in connection with the Transvaal was increased by the utter failure of his confederation policy in the Cape Colony, where the Ministry in office, headed by the late Sir John Molteno, utterly refused to respond to Lord Carnarvon's pleadings. Still, what was called

a confederation conference was held in London, under the presidency of Sir Garnet Wolseley, who represented the Imperial Government, the only other representatives being three from Natal—Sir Theophilus Shepstone, as representing the Natal Government, and two elective members of the Legislature who represented the European population. A more ridiculous hot-and-cornet proceeding could hardly be imagined. Nevertheless, there is every reason to believe that it was out of this conference that the idea of annexing the Transvaal was evoked. Hints, moreover, of what was in the wind were supplied by proceedings which were not altogether official. Great pains were taken by the Colonial Office to show attention to all South African colonists who might happen to visit England, while influences were set to work for at one and the same time strengthening the Imperialist party in the Cape Colony, and convincing the English public of the necessity for intervention in the Transvaal. This was specially apparent in the action of the late Mr. John Paterson, then representing Port Elizabeth in the Cape Parliament, and in a sense the leader of the Cape Opposition. Mr. Paterson, whose character in some respects resembled that of President Burgers, favoured the idea of confederation, which, if carried out, might either place him at the head of a Ministry for the whole Colony

or leave him in the position of political controller of the affairs of a separated Eastern Province, forming one of the factors in a general confederation. Meantime Mr. Paterson was willing to serve Lord Carnarvon's purposes by assisting to denounce the Government and people of the Transvaal. Speaking as the leader of a deputation to Lord Carnarvon of South African merchants, in October, 1876, he took pains to exaggerate the strength and importance of Sekukuni, and declared that the Transvaal was crying out for British rule. It may be well believed that one of the crimes of the Transvaal Government, in the eyes of the Port Elizabeth people, was traceable in the resolve to construct the railway to Delagoa Bay, enabling that port to become a serious competitor with Port Elizabeth for the trade with the interior. Lord Carnarvon's reply to this deputation was reassuring. He had sent out another regiment to South Africa, and he expected much from the influence of Sir Theophilus Shepstone, who had just started on his mission to Pretoria.

Sir Theophilus Shepstone arrived in Pretoria at a moment when almost every factor in the situation there was calculated to assist the end he had in view. President Burgers, influenced by the attacks and criticisms of private enemies, and realising how completely he was out of touch with the agricultural

population, who constituted the great majority of the burghers, had lost heart. On the other hand there was, so far as the population of the towns were concerned—it will be remembered that Johannesburg was not then in existence—a growing disposition to favour the idea of coming under British rule. At any rate, the town populations persuaded themselves that if President Burgers was unable to hold his own, they would do anything rather than come under the rule of Mr. Kruger. The position of the Republic, moreover, was greatly weakened by the resolve of the Volksraad—a resolve which has been criticised as illegal, and which certainly was very ill-advised—to postpone for a year the presidential election, which was due to take place in 1877. President Burgers had lost the general confidence, and, being deeply disheartened, was quite prepared, with the full approval of his conscience, to give the Republic away. And yet the Republic was in by no means a desperate condition. The redoubtable Sekukuni had, in January, 1877, sued for peace, and, on condition of his confining his people within certain limits and paying a fine of two thousand head of cattle, his petition had been granted. More than this, the very first message Sekukuni sent to Sir Theophilus Shepstone, on the latter's arrival in Pretoria, was one to the effect that the “Boers were killing his people,” of whom he

had lost two thousand, including fourteen of his own family. The outbreak of the second Sekukuni war was owing to the mistakes of British officials under the annexation Government.

From a tactical point of view, and quite apart from the question of the legality of such a step, the postponement of the presidential election for a year was, as has been said, a grave error. Had the election been at once proceeded with, popular feeling would have had an opportunity of expressing itself, and in all probability the elected President would have been placed in a very much stronger position. By some persons Mr. Kruger has been blamed for coming forward as a candidate for the Presidency at so critical a juncture. There does not, however, seem to be much, if any, justification for this view. Had he been elected, at the proper date, there can be no doubt that the annexation would never have taken place. While difficulties forced President Burgers into a desponding listlessness, the very same difficulties would only have given fresh nerve to the energetic and decisive nature of Mr. Kruger, who, though misunderstood by the town populations, would have had the vast majority of the burghers at his back. In this respect one finds difficulty in accepting the opinion of Dr. Jorissen, as expressed in his recent work, to

the effect that at the time of the annexation there was no Transvaal nation, but only a collection of Dutch-speaking farmers, scattered over a vast area, with a population in the towns of "shopkeepers and Cape practitioners." The minority of "shopkeepers and Cape practitioners" certainly were no part of a Transvaal nation; but it would be difficult to say the same of the majority formed of the agricultural population, who, in the past things had come to, had no one to whom to look for guidance. No doubt the misfortune of the loss of independence taught the burghers to stand closer together; that is what always happens when reverses overtake a nation possessed of any sterling qualities. But, just as it is impossible to create something out of nothing, so it is impossible to believe that patriotism can come into existence, merely through the pressure of circumstances. It must have been there to a very considerable extent beforehand.

Quite apart from conditions existing in the Transvaal, there can be little doubt that what greatly assisted forward the cause of annexation was what Dr. Jorissen refers to as "the lamentable readiness of the Afrikaner to concede to England the right of interfering with everything. Even to this day," Dr. Jorissen continues, "the Afrikaner sees nothing to object to in England annexing a country, say because, owing to a temporary scarcity

of money, that country does not pay its officials." The idea of a higher power stepping in to put things right has doubtless its attractions for lazy people ; but in the whole course of history it has never been found that those who invited interference of this kind had occasion to do anything save repent their weakness. What certainly does seem singular is that all the leading men in Pretoria, including Paul Kruger, Piet Joubert, Christian Joubert, and others hardly less well known, should have known what was coming and taken no steps to prevent it. But, as against this must be set two facts—first, the tact and persuasiveness shown by Sir Theophilus Shepstone in his communication with individuals, and next, the extent and nature of his promises as to the future government of the country.

The annexation took place, as is well known, on the 12th of April, 1877, how far with or without the knowledge and sanction of Sir Bartle Frere, who had arrived in Capetown from England on the 31st of March, is up to the present time a matter of uncertainty. Whatever other effects followed upon the annexation, one effect it immediately had. It placed Mr. Kruger, both by virtue of his previous record and by virtue of President Burgers' political suicide, at the very head of the more influential burghers of the South African Republic. From

that day to this, from 1877 to 1898, his influence has never been superseded or eclipsed. On the contrary, every fresh difficulty that has arisen—and these have been neither light nor few—has added to his commanding position and increased his reputation both within and without the Transvaal. And having regard to this fact, it is worth while, and may be convenient at this juncture, to endeavour to arrive at some fuller estimate of his character than has hitherto seemed necessary.

Of the reality of Mr. Kruger's religious earnestness no one has ever pretended to have a doubt, any more than they have ever pretended to have a doubt of the reality of the religious earnestness of such evangelical leaders as Wesley, Newton, or Spurgeon. If his theology is some eighty years behind the fashion of the England of to-day, that is a small matter, and, from an abstract point of view, the fashion of eighty years ago may, for all we know, be a wiser fashion than that which now exists, around us. Mr. Kruger's want of education and the superstitions of his burghers are favourite objects of ill-bred ridicule on the part of those who are covetous of Transvaal territory. Yet while there is no logical difference between members of the Pretoria Volksraad who shrink from interfering with a plague of locusts on the ground that it is a Divine visitation, and the English clerics who fifty

years ago objected to the use of chloroform in obstetrical cases, on the strength of an obscure verse in Genesis, it may very well be held that the test of education lies in the use that has been made of it. Mr. Kruger can sign his name in a fashion that to more ready penmen seems laboured, and confines his reading almost entirely to the one volume which English people distribute by the million: as an unfailing panacea for the ills of men of all nations and languages. But until you can find a man with the training of an Archbishop or a Chief Justice who can do with his education what Mr. Kruger has done with his, it will be worse than absurd to smile at the literary ignorance of one who, through pure force of character and natural intelligence, holds a place in the world's estimation as distinguished as that held by the greatest and most venerated of English statesmen.

It is complained, moreover, that Mr. Kruger's religious views tend to make him narrow. That may possibly be true, in a sense; convictions that have force have a tendency to fix the attention on one class of ideas. But to call a man narrow is usually to convey an idea of illiberality, and illiberal Mr. Kruger is not. On the contrary, there is no man who, while holding strong opinions of his own, is more ready to respect the opinions of others. There are several anecdotes that bear witness to

this element in his character. One of these, told on the authority of Dr. Leyds, appears in Mr. Bigelow's "White Man's Africa." The incident happened to Dr. Leyds himself, who, on being offered an appointment in the service of the South African Republic, raised the objection that he was not of the same religion as the President. "I don't care about your religion," was the reply, "so long as you are serviceable to the State."

A perhaps still more characteristic story is told by Dr. Jorissen. On the first occasion when, in 1876, Dr. Jorissen met Mr. Kruger, who was then Vice-President, the latter at once asked him, "Of what faith are you?" Dr. Jorissen replied, "I certainly shall not tell you." "Don't you know?" pursued Mr. Kruger, "that a Christian should always be ready to give an account of his faith?" "Yes," replied Dr. Jorissen, "to those who have the right to demand such an account." "And haven't I that right?" "No; I have not asked you what your faith is." Those who overheard the conversation thought Dr. Jorissen had been a little imprudent. Some months later, however, Dr. Jorissen went to look for the Vice-President at his own house at Rustenburg. As soon as Mr. Kruger saw him coming he turned to his wife and exclaimed, "There's the man who would not tell me what his faith is!"

* "Transvaalsche Herinneringen."

Another anecdote, also told by Dr. Jorissen, serves to show that this toleration is linked with the most earnest conviction. One fine starlight night, during the progress of a voyage to England, Dr. Jorissen and a friend got into conversation over the development and structure of the universe, going on modern scientific lines. Mr. Kruger, who was standing near, suddenly turned round and said, "Pardon the interruption, Dr. Jorissen; but if you are right, I might as well throw my Bible overboard."¹

There are other anecdotes that bear testimony to his generosity of temperament, his shrewd contempt for pretension, and his keen sense of humour. Dr. Leyds has related² how when, after a strong difference of opinion over some matter of administration, Mr. Kruger lost his temper, he came to the State Secretary's house in the middle of the night to apologise and beg him not to think any more of what had been said in the heat of the moment. The story of his reply to the Irish peer, who boasted that his father had been a Viceroy, is equally characteristic.

"A Viceroy!" exclaimed the President; "what's that?" And in reply to the information that a

¹ "Transvaalche Herinneringen."

² Bigelow's "White Man's Africa."

Viceroy was "a kind of king," Mr. Kruger remarked, with a short laugh—

"Tell him my father was a shepherd."

A typical anecdote of another kind records his criticism when a petition, full of complaints from Johannesburg, was submitted to the Executive. "Ah," remarked Mr. Kruger, "that's just like my monkey. You know I keep a monkey in my back-yard, and the other day, when we were burning some rubbish, the monkey managed to get his tail burnt, whereupon he bit me. That's just like these people in Johannesburg. They burn their tails in the fire of speculation, and then they come and bite me!"

Stories of this kind, which might be multiplied by the score, are not characteristic of a man of selfish and grasping temperament. They are rather typical of a man possessed of a sincerity as deep, a simplicity as clear, and a humour as shrewd as belonged to Abraham Lincoln. To these qualities, too, Mr. Kruger adds a playfulness of disposition, the manifestation of which sometimes surprises those who witness it. It is no uncommon thing for him, as he passes along the corridor of the public buildings to his office, to give a friendly dig in the ribs with his stick to any personal acquaintance—possibly some highly responsible official—whom he may encounter. There is, too, a well-authenticated story of how,

coming out of his office with a piece of wood in his hand, he gave a pretty sharp rap on the head to one of the occupants of the ante-chamber he had to pass through, doubtless supposing it was one of his clerks. "Who's that?" said the person struck, who happened to be a missionary and a total stranger in Pretoria. "Who's that?" was the answer; "why, it's the President!"

Nevertheless, the quality for which Mr. Kruger perhaps most deserves to be noticed is his whole-hearted and unswerving patriotism. One hardly knows how to define patriotism nowadays. With some, it seems to be expressed in a burning and unsatisfied desire to annex as much territory as possible on any kind of pretext. That is not patriotism as understood by those who first made use of the expression. With them patriotism is rather expressed in a firm and undying attachment to the soil of one's birth, the land of one's fathers, the attachment waxing all the stronger if there are associated with the history of that land records of endurance and heroism and self-sacrifice. To guard that soil, to preserve intact for future generations the liberties that have sprung into life upon it, to feel animated by the resolve that it is better to have no country than a ruined country—these are some of the duties to which a true patriotism calls. This true patriotism, though ap-

parently a little out of fashion in Great Britain, is the patriotism of Paul Kruger. It is a quality that ought to recommend him to the admiration of free peoples, who have themselves in former years been inspired by it to the performance of deeds which are still proudly to be remembered. It is a quality which turns back with contempt upon themselves the querulous complaints of those who cannot imagine any aim higher than that of piling up sovereigns or any more fitting house of prayer than the Stock Exchange. And it is a quality, moreover, the memory of which endures to eternity.¹

¹ As this does not profess to be a family history, it may be sufficient to mention here that Mr. Kruger married in the first instance a Miss du Plessis. She soon died, however, leaving him one son, who also died young. Subsequently he married another member of the du Plessis family, a niece of his first wife, who is still living. By his second marriage he has had sixteen children, most of whom are now grown up, while his children and grandchildren together now number over 120. The du Plessis family is one of the oldest families in South Africa, its original founder having gone to the Cape in the seventeenth century as a surgeon in the employment of the Dutch East India Company. The family is closely connected with that to which Cardinal Richelieu belonged, and it has even been said, with some amount of authority, that the South African du Plessis represent the senior branch.

CHAPTER V

KRÜGER AS THE PEOPLE'S ADVOCATE

WHATEVER opinion may be held with regard to Sir Theophilus Shepstone's conduct in acting upon his conditional instructions and annexing the South African Republic, there can be no question that, the annexation once accomplished, he expected things to take a very different course from that which they actually followed. That he himself undertook an immense risk and responsibility there can be no doubt. His whole future career depended on his being successful. If he had failed, or if his action had led to an immediate conflict between Dutch and English, he would doubtless have been thrown over by Lord Carnarvon, just as Dr. Jameson, having failed, was thrown over in later times. It is also only fair to remember that he himself conscientiously believed that, in accomplishing the annexation, he was really rendering a service to the South African Republic. This no less an authority than Dr. Jorissen freely admits. In order, however, to arrive

at this conviction Sir Theophilus Shepstone had allowed his mind to become warped in a particular direction. Although born in the Cape Colony, and although accustomed to use the Dutch language as readily as English, his whole official career had been passed in connection with matters of native policy and native administration. In order to preserve quiet among the large native population in Natal—a population consisting almost entirely of refugees from Zululand—he had been in the habit of playing off one powerful chief against another, having all the time his eyes fixed on Cetywayo as representing an influence which might one day come in, like a flowing tide, to obliterate all his work. Thus his belief in the power of Cetywayo became with him a stereotyped maxim, while coupled with this belief was a belief in his own power to control and manage the Zulu king.

Both beliefs were, as a matter of fact, unfounded. The crowning of Cetywayo by Sir Theophilus Shepstone, in the name of the British Government, in 1873, had exercised no effect whatever in leading Cetywayo to regard that Government, as represented by the Native Affairs Department in Natal, as entitled to claim his allegiance. Cetywayo, there can be no doubt, saw in this ceremony a move to detach the Zulus from their long friendship with the Government at Pretoria, and saw very clearly

what advantage might result to himself by playing off one Government against the other. Again, Sir Theophilus Shepstone, influenced doubtless by his constant official contact with Zulu matters, was quite misled as to the view entertained in the Transvaal as to the fear of a Zulu invasion. Apart from any other testimony, both Dr. Theal and Mr. Aylward bear witness to the fact that the burghers of the South African Republic were never under any apprehension as to the result of such an invasion. "The mountain tribes," remarks the former, "could wear out the patience and strength of a burgher commando; but the Zulu army would be met in a few desperate engagements, when the farmers would take good care to be well intrenched, and the issue would not be doubtful." ¹ Mr. Aylward, while admitting that the Zulus would be formidable enemies in their own country—the passage was written some little time before the Zulu war commenced—says with regard to their military organisation: "This very organisation, with the reputation they have got among silly people for unconquerable valour, would lead them to instant destruction at the hands of even very inferior numbers of mounted Boers." ² Nevertheless it was on the strength of the belief in the tremendous

¹ "History of South Africa," vol. v. (1854-1872) p. 226.

² "The Transvaal of To-day," p. 181.

power of the Zulus, and also of the belief in the dread felt for them in the Transvaal, that the policy of the British Government from 1877 to 1879 was based, and it was on the basis of these beliefs, in addition to his belief in his own supreme influence with Cetywayo, that Sir Theophilus Shepstone, during the conferences in Pretoria that preceded the annexation, made allusion to what might happen if he should "withdraw his hand" from the Zulus.¹

Mistaken though he was in his estimate of the situation, nevertheless there seems reason to believe that Sir Theophilus Shepstone made the mistake in all sincerity. That he was much disappointed with the course taken by the British Government after the annexation there can be no doubt whatever. Having undertaken the risks involved in the annexation, he naturally thought that the British Government would leave him in control of Transvaal affairs and enable him to carry out the pledges he had given. His own plan was to have allowed the Volksraad to meet in ordinary session in May, a few weeks after the annexation, with himself as a President-Extraordinary under existing laws, pro-

¹ This implied threat of letting loose the Zulus upon the South African Republic caused, and still causes, intense indignation among Transvaal burghers. The story has been denied, but Dr. Jorissen, in his recently published reminiscences, states that he still has in his possession the pencil note made at the time the words were spoken.

protecting the country from natives, and assisting it with the wealth of England. "I only fear," says Dr. Jorissen, "that if he had done that, we should have been politically lost." Lord Carnarvon and Sir Bartle Frere, however, were not the men to leave an inferior with a free hand. Their wish was to introduce an Imperialistic policy into South Africa. Beyond this, there was the difficulty experienced by the Colonial Office in inducing the Treasury to sanction any expenditure in the newly acquired province. So little trouble was taken, indeed, to meet the financial necessities of Sir Theophilus Shepstone's mission, that for a long time it was dependent for funds on the private liberality of a gentleman from Natal who was connected with Sir Theophilus Shepstone by marriage.

The evident failure of the British Government to redeem the pledges given by Sir Theophilus Shepstone, and the evident impotency of the new Executive to deal with either the financial or political factors in the country, naturally served to increase the indignation felt against the annexation. The protest against the annexation made by the Executive of the Republic—a protest which Sir Theophilus Shepstone assured Lord Carnarvon was merely formal—was echoed, of their own accord, by the people. The resolve was speedily

taken to send a deputation to England, for the purpose of convincing the British Government that, as the annexation had been carried out against the wish of the people, Sir Theophilus Shepstone had gone outside his instructions, that the act of annexation was therefore void, and ought to be at once revoked. The persons selected to discharge this important mission were Mr. Krüger and Dr. Jorissen, the latter of whom had for nearly twelve months past held the office of State Attorney in the Transvaal. The mission was a fruitless one. Lord Carnarvon, believing from the assurances of Sir Theophilus Shepstone that the protest was merely formal, and that it would disappear, if only a firm front were shown, declared that any reversal of the annexation was out of the question, and that the proposal for reference to a plebiscite, being contrary to English constitutional principles, could not be accepted. Nor did the deputation receive any encouragement or support from political parties in England. With the single exception of Mr. Leonard Courtney, the Liberals made no sign, and though support was offered by some of the Irish members who had succeeded in the same year in imposing important limitations upon Lord Carnarvon's "South Africa Act," it was thought that on the whole such support would do more harm than good. Apart from their complete disappointment,

the members of the deputation were well treated. They paid a visit to Lord Carnarvon's country house at Highclere, where they learnt, no doubt, to envy the ease and comfort of the life of an English peer. As for Europe, not a voice was raised on their behalf. The Transvaal burghers had yet to learn that in this world only those are helped who show a capacity for helping themselves.

In the meantime, during their absence, national feeling among the burghers had been hardening and consolidating. The shallowness of the pretexts on which the annexation was based was daily becoming clearer, while the scandal of the non-fulfilment of the pledges given had acquired monstrous dimensions. To make matters worse, the constant appointment to newly invented offices of persons imported from beyond the borders of the State, and particularly from Natal, had been forcibly brought to the notice of the burghers. That the British Government had been grievously deceived was plain beyond doubt, and thus it became the duty of the burghers to take measures for undeceiving it. In January, 1878, at a mass meeting, a resolution was passed for the appointment of a "People's Committee," the proposal at once receiving the support of all leaders who afterwards became men of note. A few months later—in April, 1878—the first meeting of "the

people" was held on the farm Doornfontein, which now forms one of the prettiest suburbs of Johannesburg. The annexation Government was perplexed. It had no force at its disposal capable of dealing with a situation of this kind, and though it issued a proclamation declaring the meeting to be illegal, no attention was paid to the prohibition. Amid much enthusiasm a second deputation, consisting of Paul Kruger, Piet Joubert (who had at last emerged from his retirement), and Mr. Edward Bok, who at a later date became State Secretary under the restored Republic, was appointed to visit England, the deputation taking with it a numerous signed memorial, on which they relied to show the real state of popular feeling in the country.

The second deputation fared no better than the first. Lord Carnarvon, it is true, owing to a difference with his colleagues as to the handling of the Eastern Question, had retired from the Ministry, his place having been taken by Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, who has always enjoyed a reputation for common sense and fair dealing. The situation, however, was a hopeless one. English feeling was just then at the very top of the wave of Imperialism which proved so serviceable to the reputation of Lord Beaconsfield. The song of the jingo was being heard round the land. The virtue of

annexation was without a peer; to suggest any surrender of territory was almost to be guilty of a crime. It is true that, influenced by the evidence afforded in the numerous signed memorial, English Liberals were more disposed than they had been in the previous year to give attention to the representations of the delegates. But, so far as the Government was concerned, the answer was only a repetition of that given in 1877. The matter had been decided; there was nothing to be done; and the obvious duty of the popular leaders was to restrain the people from taking any wrong steps.

Confronted by this absolute *non possumus*, the disappointed deputation retraced their steps to the Transvaal, this time adopting the route through Natal. There was an obvious reason for adopting this route. Sir Bartle Frere was then in Natal, pushing on his diplomatic preparations for the Zulu war. Naturally, they took the opportunity of conferring with him, without, however, much comfort or profit to themselves. At the same time they exchanged views with Bishop Colenso, whose opinions on the Transvaal situation they found, possibly to their surprise, to be very much in accordance with their own. Having received their commission from the people, it was necessary for them to report to the people with regard to its

result. Their report, made at a meeting held at Wonderfontein on the 10th of January, 1879, was chilling. The one gleam of satisfaction appeared to lie in the announcement that Sir Bartle Frere was shortly going to visit the Transvaal, when perhaps some means might be found for impressing him with the truth. It was accordingly resolved that the people *en masse* should meet him on his way to Pretoria, for the purpose of demonstrating their hostility to British rule. In the meantime, however, Sir Bartle Frere found himself involved in the terrible difficulties and anxieties that arose out of the disaster to Lord Chelmsford's force at Isandhlwana, on the 22nd of January—a disaster that not only struck a fatal blow to the cause of confederation in South Africa, but signalled the collapse in England of that Imperialism which had been at its zenith in the preceding year. It was very shortly after this disaster that Sir Bartle Frere received notice, from the lips of Mr. Joubert, of the desire of the Transvaal burghers to meet him on the road. The announcement, however, did not give Sir Bartle Frere any very deep satisfaction, for, in reply, he accused Mr. Joubert of stirring up rebellion just when British troops were contending with the common enemy.

The complications, political as well as military, that arose out of the disaster to Lord Chelmsford's

force delayed Sir Bartle Frere's departure from Natal till after the end of March, 1879. Meantime the protesting burghers of the Transvaal were taking due steps to impress him with their sense of the situation. On the farm Kleinfontein, between Heidelberg and Pretoria, they assembled, from about the middle of March, to the number of four or five thousand. The scene was like that which meets the eye in a camp. Hundreds of wagons were drawn up in orderly lines, the men living either in the wagons or in tents placed between them. The burghers of each ward, whose attendance was in all cases voluntary, were under the direction of their respective field-cornets. Dr. Jorissen, who was summoned from Pretoria to advise the leaders, has vividly described the scene and the spirit pervading the people in his "Reminiscences." "It would be difficult," he says, "to overestimate the immense importance of this gathering, which, representing as it did the whole people, lasted for four weeks. Here at Kleinfontein union was restored and co-operation made certain; the various parties, political and ecclesiastical, had come to perceive that there was something higher than small subdivisions, and that they had a Fatherland which embraced all and everything. Just now, when it had been lost, they were beginning to regard it with affection; and no matter

what compensation might be offered by the British Government, all they desired was to be left to themselves and to be set free. The influence of this assembly on the burghers and on the friends of the Republic was most marked. It could almost be spoken of as a discovering of yourselves, as a foreshadowing of things that were yet to come. That all this was leading up to a war was a conviction that was both foreseen and accepted." ¹

That this movement caused alarm in Pretoria, where Colonel Sir William Lanyon had replaced Sir Theophilus Shepstone as Administrator, can be easily conceived. When, in order to secure a better site, the burgher camp was moved a little nearer to Pretoria, the alarm became so intensified that laagers were prepared and the public buildings placed in a state of defence. The alarm, however, was groundless. Neither the burghers as a body or their leaders were in the least disposed at that juncture to make any appeal to force, and any talk in the direction of force on the part of the younger men was promptly suppressed by their elders. Sir Bartle Frere at last arrived at Heidelberg, the journey from Natal being then performed by mule-wagon. At first he showed a marked unwillingness to meet the assembled burghers. However, on the receipt of a letter informing him

¹ "Transvaalsche Herinneringen," pp. 44-45

that the burghers had waited three weeks, and depended on meeting him, he changed his mind, and consented to visit the camp on his way to Pretoria. He reached the camp on horseback, under conditions which Dr. Jorissen describes as follows:

"The stream which bounded the camp on the south having been crossed, some twenty minutes were occupied in passing through the laager to the tent where the Committee were waiting. Sir Bartle Frere rode on the right of Mr. M. W. Pretorius, while behind them came the gentlemen who accompanied the High Commissioner, with some members of the Committee. The Boers were drawn up in close order on both sides of the road, calm, quiet, and unarmed. Amid the silence that prevailed the procession passed on between the two rows. No hand was raised, no hat removed, no sign of approval or disapproval was given. The High Commissioner felt chilled. At first he had bowed right and left, but the almost oppressive silence of so many thousands seemed to affect him, and, pale as death, he stared straight before him. A brief interview, described by himself as 'coldly polite,' took place. It was agreed that another meeting should be held in two days' time, and then he rode away."

The second interview, which took place on the 12th of April, 1879—the second anniversary of the annexation—was a very much more formal affair. Sir Bartle Frere, accompanied by the Transvaal Administrator (Colonel Lanyon) and his leading officials, came, with an escort, from Pretoria, which was only a few miles distant. At the outset of his interview with the Committee Sir Bartle Frere seemed disposed to try the effect of intimidation. The burghers, however, were firm, and the proceedings took a more friendly turn. The High Commissioner frankly admitted that the opposition to the annexation was much more general than he had been led to suppose, and that it proceeded, if not from all, at least from the best and most respectable men of the Transvaal people. A memorial from the burghers, signed by M. W. Pretorius and M. J. Viljoen, as chairmen of the Committee, and by W. E. Bok as secretary, was placed in his hands, in which the views of the burghers with regard to the annexation, as well as their pledges of co-operation with Great Britain in the event of their independence being restored to them, were set forth. Sir Bartle Frere, though professing himself as personally opposed to any reversal of the annexation, undertook to write to the Secretary of State, pointing out that the memorial deserved the earnest attention of the Government. There

seemed thus to be a gleam of hope in the sky, and on the strength of it the burghers broke up their camp within three days and returned to their homes.

It is a fact much to be regretted, both in view of the results that followed and in view of his own reputation, that Sir Bartle Frere's show of concession was merely a diplomatic move for gaining time. In a despatch which is on record he regretted his want of artillery as a means of dispersing the assembled burghers, and forthwith took pains to make the annexation more permanent and more oppressive by recommending the establishment at Pretoria of a form of Government as autocratic as could be contrived. Misled by his promises, the burghers waited patiently for an answer to their memorial. The only answer they ever received reached them when, towards the close of the year 1879, Sir Garnet Wolseley arrived in the Transvaal in his capacity as High Commissioner for South-eastern Africa. Then, and not till then, they learnt that, as Sir Garnet Wolseley theatrically phrased it, "as long as the sun shone the Transvaal would remain British territory." At that time Sir Garnet Wolseley was occupied in subduing, with a strong force of British troops assisted by a powerful native contingent from Swaziland, that very same chief Sekukuni who had sued for peace at the hands of

the old Republican Government in the early part of 1877, and who had completely baffled a British force in 1878.

The burghers and their leaders now began to see that there was little or no chance of their grievances being remedied unless they were prepared to protest with weapons stronger than words. There was, it is true, the hope that there might be a change of Ministry in England, and that the Liberals, if they became possessed of power, would act up to the expressions of sympathy to which they had committed themselves while out of office. It was in a large measure owing to this consideration that, though it was deemed necessary to adopt stronger action, care was taken against any undue precipitating of a conflict. In December, 1879, a third meeting of burghers was summoned. The meeting, which was attended by the burghers in a very excited state of mind, was held on the farm known as Luipaard's Vlei, near Paardekraal. On the 16th of December, the day annually celebrated as the anniversary of the great defeat of the Zulus under Dingaan at the Blood River, in 1838, a resolution was solemnly and unanimously passed to the effect that the time for memorials to the British Government had gone by, and that no relief was to be obtained by that means. "The officials of Her Majesty the Queen of England," the resolution

went on to declare, "have, by their untruthful and false statements, closed the door through which the Parliament can be approached. For that they are responsible. The people have done what they could; again and again they would willingly have appealed to the Queen of England, for the people believe that, as surely as the sun shines, if she, the Queen of England, and the people of England knew that here a nation is being oppressed, they would never allow it. We cannot," the resolution concluded, "speak to England any more. There is no one who answers us." Other resolutions which followed pledged the people by solemn oath to work for their independence and to defend to the death "the Government about to be established." The day then named for putting this resolution in force was the 8th of April, 1880. Owing, however, to various causes, and particularly to the hopes engendered by the change of Ministry in England, this date was not adhered to, and nothing was actually done till the 16th of December, 1880.

It fell to the duty of Mr. M. W. Pretorius and Mr. W. E. Bok to convey a copy of these resolutions to Sir Garnet Wolseley at Pretoria. The mission was not without its risks, for Sir Garnet Wolseley forthwith locked them both up. Their incarceration, however, did not last very long. Cable communication with Europe having just

been established, the news of this high-handed act was imparted to leading statesmen in England, and whether owing to admonitions from Downing Street or from some mercurial change in Sir Garnet Wolseley's ideas, the prisoners were speedily released, Mr. Pretorius being at the same time offered a place on the Executive, which he did not accept. In the meantime the conviction was springing up in all parts of South Africa that the annexation of the Transvaal had been a blunder and a wrong, and that unless some remedy could be discovered there was great danger of some serious disturbance of the peace. The cause of the Transvaal burghers was warmly taken up by the more independent of Colonial journals, while in Pretoria itself the Dutch journal *De Volksstem*, then under the direction of the late Mr. J. F. Celliers, kept up a vigorous bombardment against the British administration—a bombardment which led a little later to the suppression of the paper and the institution of a State prosecution against Mr. Celliers.¹

¹ The authorities professed to look with contempt on the influence of the press. Here, however, is a curious fact. Some years later the writer of this volume occupied a room in a house which had once been the British Residency. In that room had been left a large wooden cupboard, formerly the receptacle of official documents. Its interior was divided into pigeon-holes of various sizes, all carefully labelled. A pigeon-hole about six

The triumph of the Liberals at the General Election in 1880 seemed full of good omen for the cause of the Transvaal burghers. A new and distinct danger, however, was making its appearance at the Cape. In spite of the discrediting effects of the Isandhlwana disaster and the causes that led to it, Sir Bartle Frere was resolved to make a final endeavour to carry through the policy of confederation which had been specially entrusted to him. This endeavour was made through the mediumship of the Cape Ministry and the Cape Parliament. In Sir John Gordon Sprigg, who was then Premier, Sir Bartle Frere had an instrument ready to his hand. It has been Sir John Gordon Sprigg's fate "to be the willing and devoted servant of several masters in succession. For many years he sat at the feet of the late Mr. Saul Solomon, the most independent and capable statesman that South Africa has ever known. Then, in 1878, he fell under the influence of Sir Bartle Frere. In 1884, after exclusion from office for some years, he became the servant of Mr. Hofmeyr and the Africander Bond, transferring his affections, after another brief experience of the cold shade of Opposition, to Mr. Rhodes. In 1880, at the

inches square was deemed sufficient for "Sir Garnet Wolseley's despatches," while the "pigeon-hole devoted to "Volksstem articles" was quite four times that size.

instance of Sir Bartle Frere, he introduced into the Cape Parliament a Bill empowering his Government to call a conference of South African States for the purpose of considering the question of confederation. The Transvaal was to be included in this conference, and was invited to be represented by the Administrator and State Secretary of the annexation Government, the original population of the country, monstrous as it may seem, being absolutely ignored. It was clear to the national leaders in the Transvaal that if this measure were once passed, their case would be well-nigh hopeless. They would be confronted by an accomplished federation, and advised to make the best of whatever political liberty could be secured under it.

The Transvaal leaders were not without friends in the Cape Colony and the Cape Parliament, particularly among the ranks of the Opposition. In order to invoke and secure the support of these friends, Mr. Kruger, accompanied by Mr. Piet Joubert and Dr. Jorissen, proceeded to Capetown, where all were very warmly received. While there they addressed a letter to Mr. Gladstone, who had just assumed office, setting forth their case. To this a very civil answer was received, so far as words were concerned, but in substance only repeating the *non possumus* of the previous Ministry. So many new

rights, it was pointed out, had been acquired in the Transvaal through the annexation, that to annul it would be impossible. That, however, was a matter which, for the moment, could wait. The chief object of the Transvaal deputation was to secure the defeat, in the Cape Parliament, of the Bill which was so inimical to national interests in the Transvaal. Meetings were held, at which resolutions were passed calling for the reversal of the annexation, while a monster petition, with thousands of signatures, was presented to Parliament, insisting on the rights of the South African Republic. These efforts were successful. After a warm debate on the Confederation proposals, in the course of which the Imperialistic policy of the Sprigg Ministry was severely attacked, and during the course of which the doctrine was laid down that there could be no question of confederation so long as free-Afrianders were being treated so unjustly as in the Transvaal, the Ministry practically withdrew its proposals, at the same time avoiding defeat, by accepting the "previous question."

The termination of this debate had two immediate results. It led to Sir Bartle Frere's recall, and it brought Cape Ministers back to a better realisation of their duties towards other South African communities. An interview took place between Mr. Kruger and his colleagues on one side

and the two leading members of the Cape Ministry—Sir Gordon Sprigg and Sir Thomas Upington—on the other. "What was to be done?" was the question asked—a question to which, on behalf of the Transvaal, it was replied that the only honest and practical course was to annul the annexation. "If that is done," the Transvaal delegates promised, "we undertake that the Republic will agree to confederation." The interview seemed to promise to bear fruit, the Cape Ministers undertaking to cable the substance of the conversation to England, while the Transvaal representatives engaged to remain in Capetown till a reply had been received. . . .

It is deeply to be regretted that while the Cape Ministry were thus preparing to place the question of the reversal of the annexation on a negotiable basis, efforts were being made in a more authoritative quarter to neutralise all that they were doing. With a persistency worthy of a better cause, and doubtless actuated by a determination not to admit that the policy he had worked for was a failure, Sir Bartle Frere made communications to the Colonial Office which were utterly inconsistent with the facts of the case, and which were really the cause of the war that broke out between Great Britain and the Transvaal burghers at the end of the year. According to these communications, the prospects of confederation, in spite of the vote, in the Cape

Parliament, were better than ever. The violent speeches of the Transvaal representatives had, it was true, done much mischief. The Transvaal representatives, however, had become frightened at what they had done, and had even, said Sir Bartle Frere, come to his Ministers with the view of revoking what had been accomplished, because (as the High Commissioner declared he had learnt from reliable sources) the people in the Transvaal were favourably disposed to confederation. To this was added the warning that, having regard to the number of British settlers in the Transvaal, any reversal of the annexation would inevitably lead to civil war in that country.

Nothing could have been more unfortunate than these statements, because no statements could possibly have been more misleading. The endeavour to mislead, moreover, was not confined to one official channel alone. Colonel Lañyon, as Administrator at Pretoria, and Sir George Colley, as successor, after Sir Garnet Wolseley's departure, to the post of High Commissioner for South-eastern Africa, were both at the same time assuring the Colonial Office that in the Transvaal itself affairs were settling down and taxes were being paid—a welcome piece of intelligence to a Liberal Ministry anxious to relieve the Treasury of all further claims on Transvaal account. Having declared that taxes

were being paid, it became the obvious duty of the Pretoria authorities to endeavour to collect them, with what result must be told in another chapter.

CHAPTER VI

KRÜGER AND THE WAR

WHEN the political atmosphere is in a state of tension, a very small incident may lead to an explosion. Where authority is theoretically repudiated, any attempt to exercise such authority is almost certain to convert negative into active resistance. Thus it was in the days of the split between the Israelitish tribes. That dispute might possibly have remained in its theoretical stage if it had not been for the unlucky appearance of a tax-gatherer. Then the tax-gatherer lost his life, and the split which had been provisional became final.

It was the tax-gatherer who applied the match to the magazine of Transvaal discontentment. A certain farmer named Bezuidenhout, descendant of a Bezuidenhout who had organised an unsuccessful revolt in the early days of British rule in the Cape Colony, refused, when called upon, to pay taxes to the Government. His wagon

and oxen were thereupon seized by the sheriff, and brought into Potchefstroom for sale. The sheriff, however, was doomed to be disappointed, for an armed force, led by P. Cronje, the old Commandant of the district, rode into the town, displaced the officials, and carried off, under escort, both oxen and wagon.

This act at once brought matters to a crisis. The Government hastened to issue a proclamation warning the people against illegal acts, and demanding the surrender of Bezuidenhout, Cronje, and others who had been mixed up in the affair. On the side of the burghers, the national meeting that was to have been held in the following month—January—was, at Mr. Kruger's suggestion, summoned to meet at Paardekraal on the 8th of December, 1880. It was plain to a man of Mr. Kruger's perception that the moment had arrived when the people were ready to translate protests into action. In fact the people, who had shown such marvellous patience for three years past, could no longer be restrained, and were demanding the immediate execution of the resolution passed in the previous year, declaring for the restoration of the Republic and the reinstatement of the former Government. Mr. Kruger's view of the situation was indicated by the words with which he greeted Dr. Jorissen, who had hastened from Pretoria to

Paardekraal as soon as the meeting was summoned, to give his services as legal adviser to the leaders of the movement. "Mr. Jorissen," said Mr. Kruger on meeting him, "it is ready."

On the 10th of December, 1880, the National Committee, which had been in existence since the return of the second deputation to England, and which was regarded by the burghers as representing the Republican Government, assembled under the chairmanship of Mr. M. W. Pretorius. There could be no mistake as to the spirit of those present. They were firmly resolved, no matter at what risk, to act up to the conclusion already arrived at, and to take the decisive steps which had only been postponed in the hope that actual warfare might be avoided. Meantime the burghers continued to flock in to the meeting-place. On the morning of the 11th of December no less than six hundred wagons were on the ground, and in two days' time it was estimated that some eight or nine thousand men were present. Two questions presented themselves for discussion at the outset—the constitution of the Government and the place in which it should be located. No means were to be spared which might serve to add to the authority and influence of the Republican leaders. A National Committee being too vague a thing to exercise full executive authority, it was

agreed that it should retire, and that the old Government should once more take office. Under this arrangement Mr. Kruger retained his former place as Vice-President, Mr. Piet Joubert being elected Commandant-General; and while Dr. Jorissen resumed his functions as State Attorney, Mr. W. E. Bok was appointed Acting State Secretary.

It is both interesting and instructive to note the care taken at every step by the leaders of this national movement to give legality to their action and to avoid all possibility of being charged with having promoted a movement with which the people generally had no sympathy. In order to be sure of the feelings of the people, a number of smaller meetings were held, the burghers being assembled ward by ward under their respective field-cornets. Naturally the hands of the leaders were very considerably strengthened when it was found, through means of these sectional meetings, that there was a united and universal feeling in favour of action. As a step towards the removal of any legal doubts, an extraordinary session of the Volksraad, which, in the view of the national leaders, had never ceased to exist, was called it being now Saturday, for Monday the 13th of December. When the Volksraad met it confirmed, during a single day's session all that had been done, and, in the absence of a duly elected

President entrusted the supreme executive control to a triumvirate, consisting of Paul Kruger, Piet Joubert, and M. W. Pretorius.

Meantime the occurrence of Sunday, at a juncture so full of import and responsibility, served to bring into strong relief the religious side of the character of these men of resolution and of order. Dr. Jorissen, who was himself present, narrates the story of that Sunday in the following words :—

“Between the Saturday, on which the first decisive step was taken, and the following Monday, the great Day of Rest, always revered by the burghers, intervened. It would need the pencil of a Rembrandt to depict that assembly of all ages and conditions—the patriarchs with their wives and families, sometimes seated upon camp-stools, but for the most part outstretched on the ground, on the slope to the east of where Paardekraal monument now stands. Above them was a small piece of level ground, occupied by the tents of the leaders. Looked at from above, the spectacle was that of a huge amphitheatre, with thousands of burghers seated in irregular rows on each side, quietly waiting and watching the pulpit that had been erected on the edge of the little plateau above. There was nothing but a small table with a Bible with a slight canvas screen behind it. When the

tall figure of Mr. van Warmelo rose, a deathlike stillness fell upon all. First came a prayer ; after it a hymn. Then the preacher, standing up, read the invitation that the National Committee had issued three months before to the clergy of all churches, calling on them to support the people in the arduous struggle which was approaching. Waving this printed invitation to and fro, Mr. van Warmelo, in a voice trembling with emotion, said, 'I can offer no objection to such an appeal as this. You have called me and I am here. I shall go with you and stand with you.'¹

The decisions of the National Committee and the Volksraad, announcing the re-establishment of the old Republican Government, had yet to be promulgated. For this purpose a proclamation was drawn up and sent to Potchefstroom, where, not without some difficulty, it was printed at the office of a small local newspaper.² Another step of great importance had meantime been resolved on. This was nothing else than the removal of the headquarters of the restored Republican Government to Heidelberg, a small town some forty or fifty

¹ "Transvaalse Herinneringen," p. 64. Mr. van Warmelo's presence was all the more noticeable, because he had, in 1867, had a serious difference with Mr. Kruger over the abandonment of Schoemansdal, where he was stationed as a missionary.

² The printing was got through by Mr. Izaak van Alphen, now Postmaster-General of the South African Republic.

miles from Pretoria, on the road to Natal. This step, a wise one in every respect, was suggested, there is reason to believe, by Dr. Jorissen, and agreed to by Mr. Kruger before it had been communicated either to the National Committee or the Volksraad. By planting itself at Heidelberg, the Nationalist Government secured several advantages. It placed itself in a commanding position in the country, between Pretoria and the nearest British Colony, Natal. Beyond this, the fact that the Nationalist Government was located in a known town, and was not merely wandering about in the veldt, gave it a better appearance in the eyes of lookers-on.

On the 14th of December the meeting at Paardekraal broke up, and on the 16th the leaders of the movement, accompanied by a considerable force of burghers, arrived in Heidelberg, where they occupied the place, took possession of the public offices, and, with a view to an adequate protection of their position, formed laagers north and south of the town. The first news that reached the burgher Executive the next morning was not altogether pleasant. A small reconnoitring party of burghers in the neighbourhood of Potchefstroom had been fired on by British troops, hostilities being thus commenced before the national party had had time to have any communication with the

Government at Pretoria. That this was very far from being the wish of the Nationalist leaders there can be no doubt, for they were still counting on the possibility of getting the situation into a negotiable shape before any actual conflict had occurred. Their hopes in this direction were supported by the knowledge that this was also the aim and desire of their friends and sympathisers in the Cape Colony.

This move to Heidelberg, followed as it was by the collision near Potchefstroom, for a time seemed likely to cause a serious difference of opinion among the members of the Nationalist Executive. Mr. Joubert found fault with Dr. Jorissen for advising the removal, and declared that he should at once order a return to Paardekraal. Mr. Kruger, on the other hand—and the incident serves to mark in a very general way the difference in the characters of these two men—declared that he knew ~~why~~ he had come to Heidelberg and that he intended to remain there. If, as Dr. Jorissen points out in the volume which has several times been alluded to,¹ the burghers had returned to Paardekraal and remained passive, they would have been playing directly into the hands of their adversaries, who would have allowed them to go on talking for two

¹ "Transvaalsche Herinneringen."

or three weeks, and then suddenly sent them an ultimatum backed by an armed force.

The time for waiting had gone by. A decisive step had been taken, and it was necessary that that decisive step should be backed up by a policy of energy and action. In spite of the exchange of shots near Potchefstroom, the National leaders still clung to the hope that their differences with the British Government might be adjusted without the occurrence of a conflict which, as they knew well, might jeopardise the peace of the whole of South Africa, and create a breach between the English and Dutch populations. At the same time it was absolutely necessary for them, from a military point of view, to take all precautions against any weakening of their position. The plan of campaign that had been formed was simple enough, viz., to isolate all British garrisons in the country and to prevent the arrival of British reinforcements. Particularly it was desirable, at the outset, to prevent the concentration of British forces in Pretoria. Becoming alive to the seriousness of the position, the Government in Pretoria sought to reinforce the garrison there by calling in the detachments stationed at Lydenburg in the east, and at Standerton, a village occupying a position about midway between Heidelberg and the Natal frontier. The force from Standerton, finding the road to Pretoria blocked

by the formidable body assembled at Heidelberg, turned back. The interception of the troops marching on Pretoria from Lydenburg was entrusted to Nicolaas Smit (subsequently Vice-President of the Republic) and Frans Joubert, a relative of the Commandant-General. With a force of some three hundred men, they made their way over the hills by moonlight to a spot on the Pretoria-Lydenburg road where it is intersected by a small stream known as Bronkhorst Spruit. The column from Lydenburg approached. It was met by a flag of truce, the bearer of which presented to the commanding officer a letter from the Executive at Heidelberg, requesting him to delay his march to the capital until at least the result of the negotiations of the Nationalist leaders with the British Government was known. The reply to this communication was, no doubt, the only one that a soldier could give—that his orders were to go to Pretoria, and that he intended to carry out those orders. An action at once commenced, terminating in less than half an hour with the surrender of what remained of the British force.¹

The result of this action was of the utmost

¹ This action has not unfrequently been alluded to as a "massacre." On such a point, however, the opinion of so distinguished an officer as Sir Evelyn Wood ought to be decisive, and he has always held that it was "a fair fight."

importance. On the one hand, it startled both the Government and the people of England out of the comfortable idea that Transvaal discontent was only a matter of wordy protest. On the other hand, it left the burghers in complete control of the whole country. The garrisons in Pretoria, in Potchefstroom, and in Standerton were completely isolated and cut off—so much so, indeed, that in Pretoria bets were being made four weeks after Sir George Colley's death as to the exact day of his arrival to raise the blockade. The only point of danger lay in the direction of Natal, from whence, no doubt, every effort would be made to reassert British authority. As it happened, the line of advance from Natal was one that could be easily defended, and for its defence the burgher forces took up a position, on Natal soil, around a spot where the main road traverses an elevation known as Laing's Nek. This position it became the duty of Sir George Colley, then Governor and Commander-in-chief in Natal, to force, if possible, the attempt being made on the 28th of January, 1881. The British force, however, was so inadequate, the position of the burgher forces so strong and their shooting so accurate, that the attack was repulsed with very heavy loss. Meantime a strong body of burghers had passed round Sir George Colley's position and interposed themselves between him

and his base of operations at Newcastle, the most northerly town in Natal. A few days later Sir George Colley was again defeated with heavy loss while endeavouring to open the road to Newcastle.

It is not necessary to go at length into the course of military movements, the history of which is well known. Mr. Gladstone's Government, which had been betrayed into a false position through the misleading reports forwarded by high officials in South Africa, found it necessary at one and the same time to despatch reinforcements to South Africa and to consider if there were any means of arriving at a pacific settlement. The view taken in London has been very ably and clearly stated by Sir M. E. Grant-Duff, who was, in 1881, Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, in an article, representing a speech originally prepared for the House of Commons, which appears in the thirtieth volume of the *Fortnightly Review*. Briefly speaking, the gist of that article is that whereas the British Government believed that opposition to the annexation proceeded from a malcontent minority, it really proceeded from a vast malcontent majority. Under such conditions it would have been morally impossible for a Liberal Government to proceed to a fresh conquest of the country without first endeavouring to find some pacific *modus vivendi*. The reverses sustained by the forces then in South

Africa were not regarded as serious enough to stand in the way of negotiation, nor, on the side of the Transvaal burghers, were they regarded as so decisive as to warrant them in entering on an unconditional conflict. It is a fact on record in official documents that, as early as the middle of February, communications had been made from the Colonial Office, offering an investigation of the burghers' grievances on certain terms and conditions, including the dispersal of the burgher forces then in the field.

In view of this approach towards a basis for negotiation, a suspension of hostilities had been tacitly agreed to in February, after Sir George Colley's unsuccessful attempt to cut his way through to Natal. During all this period the Central Government of the Transvaal Nationalists remained at Heidelberg, very busily occupied, but a good deal hampered by the want of communication with foreign countries. Letters for the Transvaal were conveyed by the Cape Government as far as Kimberley, and there they remained, the Cape post-office declining to carry them any further. Under these conditions very great service was rendered by Free State friends of the Transvaal Republicans, who arranged for the forwarding of letters, through private hands, to their Transvaal addressees. These Free State sympathisers, how-

ever, numerous though they were, were to some degree kept in check by the reserved and cautious policy of Mr. Brand, the Free State President, who, having declined what was practically an offer of the Transvaal Presidency some years before, appeared resolved on maintaining an attitude that would avoid all risk of offending the British Government. He had, indeed, even gone so far as to inform a Transvaal deputation that interviewed him in December, 1880, that the Volksraad, in a special session to be held in February, would not even, with his consent, take Transvaal matters into consideration. Events, however, proved too strong for him. Both the people and the Volksraad of the Free State were enthusiastic in their sympathy with their brethren in the Transvaal, and the Volksraad, in the course of the special session alluded to, passed an important resolution which gave great encouragement to the Transvaal burghers.

In the middle of all these favourable tendencies an event occurred which for the moment seemed to threaten to render all negotiation practically impossible. Sir George Colley, actuated, there is reason to believe, by the fear of being superseded in his command by Sir Evelyn Wood, on the night of Saturday, the 26th of February, 1881, conducted a force up the precipitous mountain known as

Amajuba, with the object of turning the position held by the burghers behind Laing's Nek. The appearance, when day broke on the morning of Sunday, the 27th, of British troops in what seemed so commanding a position exercised a deep moral effect throughout the burgher camp, the first impression being one of profound dismay. Mr. Kruger was at the time absent, not only from the camp but from the Executive centre at Heidelberg, having gone to Rustenburg in connection with a rumour of trouble with native chiefs in the northern districts of the Transvaal. Commandant-General Joubert, however, was equal to the occasion. A force of volunteers started to scale the mountain and, if possible, dispossess the British troops. How effectually they carried out their object, there is little need to say. Their enterprise resulting in the complete defeat of their enemy with heavy loss, including Sir George Colley himself.

The sensation produced in England when the news of this disaster became known was naturally profound. The moment was undoubtedly one to try to the very utmost the moral courage of a Government conscientiously and humanely bent on finding some amicable method of settling a controversy into which it had been so unhappily betrayed. Fortunately the moral courage of Mr. Gladstone's Ministry was equal to the occasion.

Disregarding the outcry raised in military circles and by the noisier section of their parliamentary opponents, they decided that there was nothing in the fresh situation that had arisen to put an end to negotiations which had been tentatively in progress for several weeks. Within ten days, as a consequence of this resolve, an armistice had been concluded at Laing's Nek between Sir Evelyn Wood, as representing the British Government, and Commandant-General Joubert, as representing the Transvaal burghers.

The news of this armistice, concluded at Laing's Nek on the 6th of March, 1881, did not reach the central Executive at Heidelberg, a distance of some 130 miles, till three days afterwards. The first impression produced on the minds of Mr. Kruger and his more immediate advisers was one of uneasiness and apprehension. It was feared that the conclusion of this armistice was only a device to gain time for the arrival on the border of the British reinforcements already on their march from Durban, the port of debarkation, to Newcastle. The advantages of an armistice seemed, from the Transvaal point of view, to be all on the side of the enemy. To him time was everything, while prolongation of the strife was, for the burghers, directly weakening. This impression, too, which possessed the minds of the Executive, was shared by the

burghers, to whom the news was communicated. Still, there were considerations on the other side. Two things, at least, were clear—that the communications that had passed included a sort of acknowledgment of the Republican Government, and that they implied a sincere desire to conclude a peace. Evidently, therefore, something material had been gained since, in the preceding December, the burghers had entered on what then seemed a hopeless struggle. The Government which the burghers had re-established in the land, in spite of the annexation, being once acknowledged, the annexation was, to use Dr. Jorissen's language, "in principle nullified."¹

Animated by these considerations, Mr. Kruger, accompanied by Dr. Jorissen, in his capacity of State Attorney, set out from Heidelberg for Laing's Nek, having first addressed a despatch to Commandant Cronje, in command of the investing force at Potchefstroom, informing him of the conditions of the armistice and the regulations as to the admission of supplies to the beleaguered Potchefstroom garrison. A little delay was caused in Mr. Kruger's departure from Heidelberg, owing to

¹ The incidents connected with the progress of the negotiations at Laing's Nek are fully described in a pamphlet, published in Pretoria in 1884, by Dr. Jorissen. This pamphlet has been incorporated in his later work, "Transvaalsche Herinneringen."

his desire to meet the officers taken prisoners at Amajuba, who had expressed a wish to see him. The weather, as not unfrequently happens towards the end of the Transvaal summer, was execrably bad, while the journey was rendered longer owing to the fact that the village of Standerton being in British occupation, it was necessary to make a considerable *détour*. So serious were the delays that Mr. Kruger and his companion only arrived in the neighbourhood of the camp at Laing's Nek on the evening of the 14th of March—the day on which the original armistice expired. As, however, it had in the meantime been arranged to extend the armistice for four days, any anxiety that might have arisen on this score was at once laid to rest. It need hardly be said that Mr. Kruger met with an enthusiastic reception from the assembled burghers. But what more expressly attracted his attention was a small camp, separated from the rest, under the slopes of Amajuba. It was the camp of the Free State contingent, ready, in its enthusiasm, to take part with the Transvaal burghers in any conflicts that might be to come. In the meantime, among the burghers assembled to battle for their rights, there prevailed a quiet, calm, and earnest spirit, unalloyed with either apprehension or boastfulness.

Wednesday, the 16th of March, was fixed for the

first formal meeting between the representatives of the contending parties. In the meantime there were two telegrams from Lord Kimberley, then Secretary of State for the Colonies, which demanded consideration. In the first of these, dated the 8th of March, an amnesty was offered and a willingness expressed to enter into negotiations with any persons legally empowered to act, the telegram further announcing an intention to appoint a Royal Commission to investigate the grievances complained of. The other telegram, dated four days later, named the Royal Commission, the condition of its appointment being that the burghers should disperse, and that the Commission should consider the advisability of granting self-government under certain conditions. This was as far as the British Government was, at the moment, prepared to go. It may be remarked, however, that the proposal for a Royal Commission of investigation was merely the belated adoption of a suggestion that had been made from Capetown nearly three months previously, and which had then been rejected by Lord Kimberley as "inopportune." Whether four British defeats had rendered it more opportune might be a somewhat nice question to decide.

- According to arrangement, the representatives of both sides met, at a spot midway between the two

military positions, on Wednesday, the 16th of March. On the British side were Sir Evelyn Wood, Sir Redvers Buller, and Majors Clarke and Frazer, the Transvaal burghers being represented by Messrs. Kruger, Pretorius, and Joubert (constituting the triumvirate), and three members of the Executive, viz., Christian Joubert, Dr. Jorissen, and J. Maré. Dr. Jorissen, in his graphic account of the negotiations, has given some interesting sketches of the representatives of the British Government—Wood, “lively, sprightly, and bustling, cracking jokes with Joubert as if they had been brought up together in the service;” Buller “with a composed countenance, finely cut, courteous, as a man of culture,” but not taking the slightest trouble “to conceal either his dissatisfaction with the course of affairs or his contempt for the enemy.”¹ The conference, which lasted from ten in the morning till six in the evening, was a series of skirmishes. One of the principal subjects of discussion was the constitution of the proposed Royal Commission, the contention on the British side being that, as the burghers had asked for a Royal Commission, they ought to leave its constitution and its powers entirely in the hands of the Colonial Office. To this the objection was made that when the burghers suggested a Commission.

¹ “The Peace Negotiations at Laing’s Nek,” p. 15.

they had intended to mean a Commission with members nominated by both sides. The military steps to be taken as a set off to the dispersal of the burghers and the definition of a suzerainty, also caused considerable discussion. Two convictions, however, remained impressed on the minds of the Transvaal representatives—first, that there was on the part of Great Britain a sincere readiness to conclude peace; and next, that this readiness was linked with a desire to leave everything as open as possible for the final decision of the Royal Commission.

The progress of the negotiations was cabled to Lord Kimberley, and it was agreed that the conference should assemble again as soon as a reply from Lord Kimberley had been received. In the meantime both parties were looking anxiously for the arrival of Mr. Brand, who, in his capacity as President of the Free State, had been for some time zealously at work as a mediator, and had started from Bloemfontein for Newcastle as soon as he heard of the conclusion of an armistice. That the Free State was deeply interested in the progress and result of the negotiations there can be no doubt. While the sympathies of the Free State population were entirely with the Transvaal burghers, the Government at Bloemfontein had felt bound to profess a complete neutrality. Presi-

dent Brand had sent reassuring messages to Lord Kimberley as to Free State neutrality; but not the less had Free State burghers done their utmost to furnish their Transvaal brethren with the sinews of war, and had even put a force in the field for their assistance. Quite apart from this, too, the unity of interests between the two Republics could not but establish and keep alive a strong feeling of mutual sympathy.

Time passed, and as Lord Kimberley's reply had not arrived, an extension of the armistice for three days was agreed on between the military commanders on both sides. At last, on Friday, the 18th of March, the reply from the Colonial Office was communicated. What was its purport?

It is not necessary to enter into any prolonged account of what passed in connection with the critical stage of the negotiations that had now arrived. Dr. Jorissen, in the two publications already alluded to, gives an account so minute and yet so graphic that it well deserves the attention of all who wish to understand the spirit in which the Transvaal burghers were acting.¹ Briefly, it may be said, Lord Kimberley's reply came as a disappointment and a blow. It accepted all that the burghers were willing to concede, but practically

¹ "The Peace Negotiations at Laing's Nek," pp. 25-47, also "Transvaalsche Herinneringen," pp. 96-116.

offered nothing in return. Everything was to be left to the decision, or rather to the report, of a Royal Commission, on which only the British Government was to be represented, and which would not be possessed of full powers. No time was named within which the final decision of the British Government was to be acted on. No mention was anywhere made of a burgher Government, while questions relating to severance of territory, external control over native affairs, and grave matters of a similar kind, were to be left to the Royal Commission, whose report would naturally fix the maximum of what the British Government would finally concede. One of the strangest things, however, in Lord Kimberley's telegram was a reference to Commandant-General Joubert, representing him as prepared to agree to a severance of territory, which would have left his own home outside the Republic. Mr. Joubert, it is hardly necessary to say, gave this report an unqualified denial.

There was only one feeling throughout the whole burgher camp, through which the news of the nature of Lord Kimberley's reply quickly ran. Indignantly, yet resolutely, the burghers decided that these terms were impossible, and that rather than accept them they would fight to the bitter end. Many voices in the great council assembled in the

tent of Nicolaas Smit, who had acquired the title of "the fighting general," spoke of fresh defensive measures; not a single voice suggested a surrender. The conflict, unless better terms could be arrived at, must be prolonged, and prolonged, too, with the assistance, ready and willing to be accorded, of the burghers of the Free State. If the negotiations, which were to be resumed on Monday, the 21st of March, failed, notification was at once to be given to the Free State leaders, some of whom had been taking part in the discussion of the offered terms. The terms meantime were fully communicated and discussed throughout the camp. Everywhere the feeling was the same; such conditions were impossible. The gloom of the situation was somewhat relieved when, on the afternoon of Sunday the 20th of March, President Brand arrived in the camp, having on his way paid a brief visit to Sir Evelyn Wood. Something might result from his mediation. It soon became clear, however, that Mr. Brand did not realise the intensity of the situation. His arguments were all in favour of submission to the terms that had been offered. Gentleness and peaceableness would draw down a blessing. For hours the conversation wavered backward and forward, ever returning to the same point. What followed can best be described in the words of Dr. Jorissen:—

"The hour grew late, and silence prevailed in the camp. Most of the burghers had betaken themselves to rest, or, as was made evident by the sound of their hymns on every side, were ending their Sabbath with religious worship. Then this sound also died away. The moonshine wrapt us in almost a golden light; the cool evening breeze refreshed the close atmosphere of the tent in which now only the chief leaders remained with President Brand. It was about nine o'clock in the evening. We despaired of convincing our honoured guest of our determination to prolong the struggle. . . . Then, at the request of Mr. Kruger, I read out the 'Third Proclamation.' President Brand sat on my left, by one of the high boxes on which we had placed the lights, whilst all round us were seated the men who had risked their lives in battle, all of us having during the past three months shown that we could make our words good. 'I do not think any one was present who did not feel that we were discussing, not merely our own future, but the future of South Africa. I read in a low, deep voice; I was anxious that every word should carry weight. Was not the document written as with our hearts' blood? You could have heard a pin drop. When I had finished Brand raised his head. All his animation was gone. Speaking quietly, rather to himself than

to us, he said, 'From that may God preserve us!'"

This "Third Proclamation," which has never seen the light except in Dr. Jorissen's pages, was composed in the interval that elapsed between the receipt of Lord Kimberley's unsatisfactory message and the conference above described. It is a remarkable and forcible document, reciting the history of the negotiations, giving the reasons why the terms up to that time offered could not be accepted, and making a solemn appeal to Afrikanders throughout the whole of South Africa to stand by the Transvaal burghers in the conflict that seemed inevitable. Quoting the famous saying of William of Orange in 1672—"Rather a ruined country than no country"—the Proclamation contained this sentence: "We say: If you will have our country, take it; but it shall be over our bodies and the ~~wash-heaps~~ of our property and goods." It was this sentence that so deeply impressed President Brand, who early on the following morning hastened over to meet Sir Evelyn Wood prior to the renewal of the peace conferences. The position taken up by the Nationalist leaders was clear and precise. The burghers could not disperse and lay down their arms upon any other conditions than these,—that, instead of promises and assurances,

¹ "Transvaalsche Herinneringen," pp. 101-101.

the foundation principles of a peace should be laid down by a mutual covenant which should define the work to be done by the Royal Commission to be subsequently appointed, the burghers in this case giving up their claim to be represented on the Commission. Besides this, it was felt that there should be no cutting off of territory, but that the Transvaal which England gave back should be the same Transvaal that had been annexed in 1877.

When the conference assembled the negotiations began afresh, the discussion leading steadily but slowly towards the arrangement of some such settlement as the Transvaal leaders desired. The country was to be returned to the burghers within six months; a British Resident was to be located in Pretoria for the protection of British interests, and to be a means of communication between the Republic and the British Government; something had to be agreed to with regard to the protection of native interests, in order, as Sir Evelyn Wood very frankly told the representatives of the burghers, to satisfy the prejudices of the English public; while the question of any severance of territory was to be left to the Royal Commission, always acting in view of the policy indicated in Lord Kimberley's earlier telegrams. There was, however, a last hitch to be surmounted. The Transvaal representatives, Dr. Jorissen especially,

pressed for the drawing up and signing of a protocol defining the terms of peace. This was objected to from the British side as unnecessary—a belief into which Sir Evelyn Wood had more than half persuaded Commandant-General Joubert. A private conference between Kruger, Joubert, and Jorissen resulted in a better understanding among the Transvaal representatives. Stopping a messenger who was being despatched to telegraph to England the news of an extended armistice, Mr. Kruger put the position to Sir Evelyn Wood in a manner which, if brusque, was at any rate too plain to be ignored. An explanation followed, President Brand intervening most usefully in favour of the advantages offered by a mutually signed document. The point—an all-important one for the burghers—was gained. The necessary document was drawn up and signed. A day or two more sufficed for the receipt of the approval of the British Government of what had been done, and for an exchange of courtesies, for the most part welcome and sincere, between the leaders on both sides.

The desired end had been gained. Seven hundred burghers had, three months earlier, ridden down from Heidelberg to protect the frontier. Four thousand burghers—so greatly had the force increased—now rode away to their homes, leaving the camp at Laing's Nek to silence and historic memories.

CHAPTER VII

KRUGER AND THE CONVENTIONS

ALTHOUGH the terms of peace had been settled there was much yet to be done before the Transvaal was actually restored to its original possessors. Notwithstanding the fact that the proposed Royal Commission had undergone a material alteration in respect of the functions it was to discharge, the appointment of such a Commission, consisting only of British representatives, remained a fixed idea in Downing Street. Accordingly, on the 5th of April, 1881, a Commission was issued nominating Sir Hercules Robinson, Sir J. H. de Villiers, and Sir Evelyn Wood "to make full and diligent inquiry into all matters and things relating to the future settlement of the Transvaal territory," according to such instructions as they might receive. The instructions to the Royal Commission, as set forth in official publications, serve very well to indicate the state of mind prevailing in Downing Street in respect of the situation that had arisen.

After recapitulating the terms agreed to at Laing's Nek, the instructions went on to enumerate various matters in respect of which certain views were entertained by her Majesty's Government. Among these were included (1) the determination of a boundary line in "the territory known as the Keate Award"; (2) the payment of the public debt of the Province; and (3) the recognition of all lawful acts done by the Government during British occupation. "Entire freedom of action," it was added, "will be accorded to the Transvaal Government so far as is not inconsistent with the rights expressly reserved to the Suzerain Power. The term Suzerainty," Lord Kimberley further explained, "has been chosen as most conveniently describing superiority over a State possessing independent rights of government subject to reservations with reference to certain specified matters." There is in this language a distinct limitation of the control to be exercised by the British Government, and that distinct limitation was not without its importance at a later date. The instructions then discussed at considerable length the desirability of making serious deductions from the territory included in the South African Republic at the time of the annexation. It is not altogether unamusing to find that, as an argument in favour of severing the Wakkerstroom and Utrecht districts—the most

southerly portion of the former Republic—Lord Kimberley contended that such a severance would prevent “the recurrence of those dangerous border disputes between the Boers and the Zulus which were in a large measure the cause of the Zulu War.” Seeing that the award in respect of the border question had been given in favour of the Zulus, and seeing also that the British Government had in the meantime, at the cost of some five millions sterling, broken up the old Zulu kingdom, it seems difficult to read the above remarks without suspecting Lord Kimberley either of a keen sense of humour or a complete inability to appreciate a joke. A good many paragraphs in the instructions were devoted to the protecting of native interests. Zoutspanberg, Lord Kimberley suggested, should be left to the natives, the argument in favour of this arrangement being, apparently, that it would have the effect of “diminishing the occasions for action on the part of the British Government” with regard to the internal affairs of the country. The declaration against slavery in the Sand River Convention was, moreover, to be reaffirmed. Finally, it was suggested that the old title of “South African Republic” should be discontinued, and that in its stead should be adopted the title of “The Transvaal State.”

These instructions will hardly be understood

unless it is remembered that the Liberal party in the House of Commons, like the image in Nebuchadnezzar's dream, is composed of various materials, which often have no agreement with each other. The whole Liberal party, there can be no doubt, was opposed to any attempt at a reconquest of the Transvaal, and this opinion was fully expressed in the instructions given to Sir Evelyn Wood in respect of the conclusion of peace at Laing's Nek. The moment, however, that that object was achieved, the most exigent section of the Liberal party began to make its influence felt. This section is what may be called the philanthropic or humanitarian section—the section which regards itself as the special possessor of the principles that led to the abolition of slavery in the British Empire nearly fifty years before the Transvaal War of Independence was fought. In its deep anxiety to protect the South African native, and labouring under the weight of traditional rumours of Dutch injustice and cruelty, this section of the Liberal party took upon itself, from the moment the peace was signed at Laing's Nek, the duty of providing against a too liberal treatment, from their point of view, of the Transvaal burghers. Peace was to be made: that was agreed; but the terms of peace were to be cut down to the narrowest possible

dimensions. Liberal journals in London which, up to the day of the conclusion of peace, had declaimed against the forcible subjugation of an unwilling people, suddenly adopted a new line, and employed their resources in crying out for more strict limitations of the freedom to be granted to the restored Transvaal Republic. In short, in obedience to the demands and out of consideration of the votes of this particular section of members of the House of Commons, the Colonial Office, instead of wisely taking a generous view of what was due to the Transvaal, did its best to cut the conditions of restoration down to the lowest possible minimum.

What might have happened if the members of the Royal Commission had been men of narrow capacity, it would be difficult to say. Fortunately, while Sir Hercules Robinson was a man of great common sense and independence of character, Sir J. H. de Villiers was possessed of an almost unrivalled South African experience, as well as a clear and judicial mind. Sir Evelyn Wood, it is true, had his own rôle to play—a rôle which brought him on several occasions into conflict with his fellow-commissioners. There can be little doubt—and, from a soldier's point of view, this is no discredit to him—that what Sir Evelyn Wood had most at heart was the creation of a position which

would lead to a renewal of hostilities. If the conclusions arrived at by the Royal Commission could only be made unacceptable enough, the Volksraad might refuse to sanction the Convention in which they would be embodied, leaving Great Britain once more free to prosecute the war with all available resources. As it happened, the experience of Sir J. H. de Villiers, added to the common-sense of Sir Hercules Robinson, availed always, whenever a crucial point arose, to place Sir Evelyn Wood in a minority.

The sittings of the Royal Commission commenced, at Newcastle, in Natal, in May, 1881, and came to a termination at Pretoria in August, on the third of which month the document known as the Pretoria Convention was signed. It was originally suggested that the sittings should, throughout be held in Pretoria. This proposal, however, was negatived through the fear that, owing to the still disturbed state of the country, the locating of the Commission in Pretoria might lead to complications. Newcastle was quickly found to be inconvenient. It was frequently desirable for the members of the Commission to have before them official and other persons who resided in or near Pretoria; and as there seemed no likelihood of the peace being disturbed, the Commission proceeded to the Transvaal capital,

holding its first sitting there in the middle of June. The minutes of the proceedings at these sittings, which are included among papers presented to Parliament, supply decisive evidence on three points: (1) the fairness and common sense of Sir Hercules Robinson and Sir J. H. de Villiers; (2) the strong feeling of antagonism against the Transvaal burghers entertained by Sir Evelyn Wood; and (3) the straightforwardness and honesty of the leaders of the National movement. The Commission had to deal with a variety of questions. These included the compensation, if any, to be paid to British subjects who might wish to leave the country; the duties of the British Resident; the protection to be afforded to native interests; the fixing of a boundary in the territory affected by the Keate Award; the suggested severance of territory on the eastern side of the Republic; and the financial obligations of the country. The question of the severance of territory was quickly disposed of. The majority of the Royal Commission—Sir Hercules Robinson and Sir J. H. de Villiers—reported strongly against it, and the dissent of Sir Evelyn Wood was ignored. As for the Keate Award, although given in 1870, it had never been acted on up to the date of the annexation in 1877, and since that date the British Government had quietly ignored it. As regards

the financial liabilities of the Republic, the valuable memorandum on the subject by Sir W. B. Gurdon, who acted as Assistant Commissioner for Finance, will always be found worth reading, especially for the following passage :—

“It will thus be seen that the oft-repeated statement that the British Government found half a crown in the Treasury of the Transvaal, and left the finances in a flourishing condition, is not strictly true ; and it is much to be regretted that such a statement should have been made in terms needlessly offensive to the Transvaal burghers by those whose official position should have enabled them to obtain correct information with regard to the finances of the country. The Transvaal, at the time of the annexation, was, like almost every other country in the world, in debt ; but although the condition of the country has been in many ways improved, the debt has not been reduced during British administration.”¹ Thus a stereotyped fiction was officially disposed of.

The Pretoria Convention was signed on the 3rd of August, to be submitted for ratification to a Volksraad to be immediately elected. An interval of three months was allowed for this final step, the Convention to be null and void unless it had been duly ratified by the 3rd of November, 1881. The

¹ Blue Book C—3114, p. 45.

terms of the Convention were not deemed satisfactory by the members of the triumvirate, who, in placing it before the Volksraad, made no attempt to conceal their dissatisfaction. "We cannot flatter ourselves," said Mr. Kruger, in his capacity as Vice-President, "with the hope that the Convention will satisfy you in its various provisions. It has not satisfied ourselves, but we venture to give you this assurance—that we signed it under the conviction that, under the circumstances, sincere love for our fatherland and solicitude for the welfare of South Africa demanded from us not to withhold our signatures from this Convention." The discussions in the Volksraad showed that Mr. Kruger's words were well founded. It became clear that in respect of several points in the Convention deep dissatisfaction prevailed. Special exception was taken (1) to the fact that whereas the terms of peace signed at Laing's Nek left the "control" of foreign relations to the Suzerain, the Convention gave the Suzerain the "direction" of foreign relations; (2) to the position of the Resident, who would be able to interfere in certain matters of domestic legislation, instead of merely representing the Suzerain; and (3) the payment by the Republic of debts which might not perhaps be proved to have any existence. Telegraphic communications were at once addressed to Mr.

Gladstone, towards whom a profound gratitude has always been entertained by the Transvaal burghers as the author of their restored independence. The reply received did not offer any immediate concession, though it held out the hope of revision at some future time if, on trial, the Convention was not found to work well. With this assurance the members of the Volksraad felt bound at the moment to be content, being no doubt helped to this conclusion by the advice of sympathisers in South Africa, who were aware that the Pretoria Convention expressed the utmost which, at the moment, the British Government, having regard to the state of public opinion in England, could afford to give. The Raad ratified the Convention, for motives which were explained in the ratifying resolution. "These motives," it was declared "the Raad dares to publish, without any reservation, to the whole world. They may be stated in two words—fear, of renewed bloodshedding between races who are called to bear with and esteem each other; fear of renewed division between the two chief representatives of the white races in South Africa, which undermines the common welfare of all the States and Colonies of South Africa

Was this declaration of motive sincere? Undoubtedly it was. The sense of South African

nationality dwells, and always has dwelt, strongly with these pioneers of order and civilisation. Bound both, by race and by history to the whole mass of Afrikaners, whether in the Free State or in the two British Colonies, they have always felt the force of the unity of interest created by a similarity of aims and of dangers. Naturally, there is a closer sympathy between the Afrikaners of the Transvaal and the Afrikaners of the Free State and Natal, than there is between Transvaal Afrikaners and those of the Cape Colony, because in Natal, in the Free State, and in the Transvaal all are sprung from the same stock—from the “emigrant farmers” who took part in the “great trek” of 1836. The Free State burghers, as has been seen, rendered material assistance to the struggling Transvaalers in 1880-1, and were prepared to render more, while it is a known fact that in Natal the sympathy of the Dutch population was not limited to words. When, as will subsequently be seen, disagreement arose between a section of Cape Afrikaners and their kinsfolk in the South African Republic, the cause was to be found in the presence of certain special influences

After the Jameson raid the attitude of the Dutch farmers in Natal gave serious anxiety to the Natal Government, which, according to published official documents, sent a request to the Transvaal Executive asking them to use their influence to restrain the Natal farmers.

which, so far as the Cape Afrikaners are concerned, have now lost their power.

The Pretoria Convention was a trial Convention—a Convention to be subject to revision in case it was not found to work satisfactorily. It was not long before its inconveniences began to be felt. The first point of dispute was raised over the adoption by the restored Pretoria Government of the old title of the country—the South African Republic. A sharp despatch came from the Secretary of State to the High Commissioner, for communication to the Pretoria Government, claiming that, according to the Convention, the title of “South African Republic” was prohibited, and that the title to be used was “Transvaal State.” This change of title represented a very serious grievance in the eyes of the Transvaal burghers, to whom it always appeared in the light of a reminder of some forfeited portion of their independence. On the other hand, the employment of the name of “Transvaal State” instead of “South African Republic” was no kind of advantage to the British Government, though, through its resemblance to the title of the “Orange Free State,” it may have appealed to Lord Kimberley’s sense of symmetry. Its use was doubtless intended to convey a sense of the limitation, by the Pretoria Convention of 1881, of the liberty guaranteed by

the Sand River Convention of 1852. The Pretoria Government, however, justified its avoidance of the use of the new title by the wording of the Convention itself, in which, whether by mistake or not, it was laid down that the country was "hereinafter"—not "hereafter"—to be known as the "Transvaal State."

The arrangements, too, made in respect of the conduct of the foreign relations of the Republic soon led to friction and annoyance. Claiming the "direction," and not merely the "supervision," of those relations, the Colonial Office insisted that the terms of the Pretoria Convention should be rigidly construed, and that all communications between the Pretoria Government and foreign Powers should go through British ambassadors or consular officials. The improbability of the Pretoria Government receiving any satisfaction in this way can readily be understood. A characteristic case in point arose when it became desirable for the Pretoria Government to enter into correspondence with the Portuguese authorities at Delagoa Bay. The course which the correspondence had to take was of this kind—from the Transvaal Government to the British Resident in Pretoria; from the British Resident to the High Commissioner in Capetown; from the High Commissioner to the Colonial Office in London; from the Colonial

Office to the Foreign Office; from the Foreign Office to the Portuguese Minister in London; from the Portuguese Minister to the Portuguese Government in Lisbon; from Lisbon to Delagoa Bay; and then all the way back again. Such a system of circumlocution was paralysing as well as humiliating. In the meantime, while maintaining this hold upon the foreign relations of the Transvaal, the British Government neither gave nor offered any advantage in return. The rights of a Suzerainty were minutely exacted; the responsibilities of a Suzerainty were altogether ignored. How is it possible, as it has been well asked by a high French authority—M. Desjardins—for a State to assert a protectorate and do nothing to protect? The question is one that possesses a wide importance to-day.

Friction arose, moreover, in respect of native disturbances on the western frontier, where, in spite of protests made to the Royal Commission, the shadow of the Keate Award had stood in the way of the demarcation of such a frontier as would ensure peace. In the main the conditions of the Keate Award, which, if acted on, would have deprived the Republic of a considerable extent of territory in the occupation of Europeans, were ignored. The annexation Government, while it was in power, would not consent to a diminution of

Transvaal territory, and naturally it would have been difficult, if not impossible, to force upon the restored Republic conditions which had been repudiated under British rule. Nevertheless, wherever it was possible, a piece was snipped off the Republic, the result being that native chiefs who wished to live within the Transvaal were left outside it, exposed to attacks from hereditary enemies who sought to take advantage of their isolation. All through the year 1882 these matters were made the subject of bitter complaints from Downing Street against the Government at Pretoria, the difficulties of which were increased by the stirring up against them of powerful native tribes in the northerly districts of the Transvaal. The chief Mapoch, whose stronghold practically commanded the road from Pretoria to Lydenburg, broke out in revolt, and was only subdued after hard fighting extending over some months. This war with Mapoch, moreover, had its indirect as well as its direct effects upon the general situation; for while the desirability of despatching a deputation to England, with the view of removing the causes of misunderstanding, was acknowledged, it was considered undesirable to do so while the campaign against Mapoch remained undecided.

—In the early part of 1883, however, two events occurred which materially helped forward the pos-

sibility of arriving at a settlement of the difficulties with the British Government. In the Transvaal Mr. Kruger was elected by a large majority to the Presidency, polling 3,431 votes against 1,171 polled by Commandant-General Joubert. That Mr. Kruger would be elected was really a foregone conclusion. The ascendancy he had gained and his valuable and patriotic services to the country rendered him by far the most acceptable candidate. Some talk arose about starting a third candidate in the person of Mr. J. G. Kotze, the Chief Justice of the Republic. Mr. Kotze, however, very wisely declined the invitation addressed to him. Nearly at the same time a very important administrative change took place in London. Lord Derby, who had retired from the Beaconsfield Ministry in 1878, joined Mr. Gladstone's Cabinet and took the place of Lord Kimberley at the Colonial Office, Lord Kimberley taking charge of the department of Secretary of State for India. As Secretary of State for the Colonies Lord Derby has been made the subject of a good deal of criticism. The *Times*, when he undertook the responsibility for Colonial affairs, alluded to him as "a cold-water engine." From Capetown he has been accused of a neglect of British interests in allowing Germany to establish a foothold in South-western Africa. Judging, however, by events that have subsequently hap-

pened, there seems room for the belief that "a cold-water engine" at the Colonial Office may be in no wise such a bad thing. But whatever Lord Derby's shortcomings, there was one thing which he possessed. He possessed a thorough knowledge both of the principles and practice of diplomacy. He understood that treaties and conventions are intended to provide means of agreement, and not occasions for quarrelling. He understood also the courtesies with which diplomatic intercourse should be carried on.

Relying, therefore, on the undertaking given at the time the Pretoria Convention was ratified, and believing that in Lord Derby would be found a more negotiable man than Lord Kimberley, the Transvaal Executive, at Mr. Kruger's instance, took measures to prepare the way for another deputation to England. In the spring of 1883 Dr. Jorissen proceeded to England, armed with a commission to take soundings and to ascertain whether the British Government was prepared to discuss a modification of the existing Convention. Dr. Jorissen found that the situation was, on the whole, favourable to the views of the Transvaal Government, and informed that Government by cable that Lord Derby would be willing to receive a deputation in London. Meantime the Volksraad, acting, as it would appear, independently of Dr. Jorissen's in-

quiries, had passed a resolution to the effect that the time had come for reconsidering the Pretoria Convention, and authorising the Government to take the necessary steps to secure such reconsideration.¹ Lord Derby's consent to receive such a deputation was duly forwarded, and it was arranged that the deputation, consisting of Messrs. Krüger, S. J. du Toit, and N. J. Smit, should be in London at any time after the end of October.

The selection of this deputation has always seemed to require some explanation. That President Kruger would be one of the members was obvious, and there was appropriateness also in the selection of Mr. Smit, who had greatly distinguished himself in the War of Independence, and who either then, or a little later, held the office of Vice-President. On the other hand, the inclusion of the Rev. S. J. du Toit in the deputation has always seemed a puzzle. At the time he held the not very important post—that is, in a political sense—of Superintendent of Education in the Transvaal, a post whose duties he discharged in a haphazard and, as it appeared afterwards, far from satisfactory manner. He was not, either, particularly well

¹ Dr. Jorissen, in his "Transvaalsche Herinneringen," states that he telegraphed the fact of Lord Derby's willingness in July. The Volksraad resolution, however, was passed in June, and it seems unlikely that such a resolution would have been passed without something to go upon.

known nor superabundantly trusted in the South African Republic, the distrust felt towards him being subsequently justified by the part he took against the Transvaal, in the Cape Colony, in connection with the controversies that arose out of the first Swaziland Convention in 1890 and 1891. It would almost seem as if Mr. du Toit, with some end in view which was foreign to the main object of the deputation, had pushed himself into a position which in most respects he was but ill-qualified to fill.

The deputation arrived in London in the first week of November, 1883, and, at Lord Derby's invitation, proceeded to place him in possession of a statement of their case. This statement set forth (a) the principal objections to the Pretoria Convention as a whole and (b) the particular points in respect of which it had appeared to be unworkable. Under the first head it was pointed out that the Pretoria Convention was not the result of a free negotiation between two parties, but "a unilateral document, framed by a Royal Commission" in which the Transvaal burghers were not represented; that the representatives of the burghers urged objections on various points which the Commissioners declined to consider; that in several respects the Convention was a

violation of the principles laid down in the preliminary treaty of peace; that the Convention seemed to bear a temporary character; that it had been ratified by the Volksraad under protest, to prevent bloodshed; and that an experience of two years had proved that the objections urged against it were well founded. The impracticability of the Convention, it was further urged, had appeared chiefly (1) in respect of the Western boundary; (2) in respect of the Suzerain rights reserved to Her Majesty; (3) in the obligation laid on the Transvaal Government to submit to Her Majesty all legislation concerning the interests of natives; and (4) in the financial burdens imposed on the Republic. The fixing of the Western boundary had torn asunder native tribes; the rights of the Suzerain in respect of foreign relations had greatly complicated communication with any foreign Power, and had provided opportunities for cattle-stealing on the border; while the obligation to submit to Her Majesty's Government all measures relating to native interests would place an enormous power in the hands of any natives who might be disposed to rebel. In consequence of these difficulties and objections, the deputation suggested that the Pretoria Convention should be replaced by a new agreement founded on the principles of international law;

that Great Britain and the Transvaal might be placed in the position of two contracting parties; that the frontier line might be so readjusted as to give security for peace and order; that the South African Republic should be freed from the restrictions by which it was prevented from taking action, in its intercourse with native tribes on its borders, on behalf of humanity and peace; and that the Republic should also be freed from the liability of debts contracted during the period of the annexation.

The reply received to these proposals was not, from the Transvaal point of view, satisfactory, the least satisfactory feature being Lord Derby's refusal to recognise the Sand River Convention of 1852 as possessed of any vitality or binding force. It would be tedious to go at any length into the progress of the correspondence. What is rather to be taken note of is the fact that, as soon as the deputation arrived in England, it was made the object of an active campaign, on the part of that section of the public who have always regarded themselves as the special advocates of native rights in South Africa and as the special antagonists of the Dutch race. It was, in fact, a repetition of the campaign instituted, in the year 1835, by Dr. Philip against the Dutch population of the Cape Colony. On the 17th of November, 1883,

within a fortnight after the arrival of the Transvaal deputation in London, an immense public meeting was held at the Mansion House, under the presidency of the Lord Mayor—the late Alderman Sir Robert Fowler, M.P.—for the purpose of prejudicing the work of the deputation, and, especially, of preventing any such rectification of the Western frontier of the Transvaal as was regarded by the Transvaal representatives as necessary for the maintenance of peace. The speakers at this meeting included the Earl of Shaftesbury, Mr. W. E. Forster, the Rev. John Mackenzie, Sir Henry Barkly, and Sir T. Fowell Buxton. On the one hand every old slander against the Dutch population of South Africa was revived and embellished; on the other hand every civic and Christian virtue was ascribed to the Bechuana chiefs who had become the *proidgés* of missionary enterprise. What gave to the meeting perhaps more than anything else its persecuting character was the fact that the chairman had exercised all his influence, both as Lord Mayor and as a member of Parliament, to prevent the exhibition of any public hospitality to members of a deputation visiting England on an amicable mission at the invitation of Her Majesty's Government.¹

See the report of the meeting, as published by the Abori-

The influence of this meeting, and of the parliamentary and public force which it represented, is traceable from beginning to end of Lord Derby's correspondence—correspondence conducted on both sides with the utmost courtesy—with the Transvaal deputation. The meeting and the power behind it represented a factor which could not be ignored. Lord Derby himself, "cold-water engine" as he was, could not act in the face of it. Hence his repeated demands that the settlement of the question of the Western border should be disposed of before any other point was discussed. Whatever was conceded to the South African Republic had to be conceded in the teeth of slanderous accusations founded on ignorance and traditional prejudice, and backed up by misrepresentation, official and unofficial, which was in some cases the result of a vivid imagination and in other cases of deliberate intention to mislead. And what did all this agitation secure for those who were supposed to be its special *protégés*? Absolutely nothing. Bechuanaland has become a portion of the Cape Colony. The chiefs who were so belauded at the Mansion House in 1884 have been absolutely wiped out by forces, official and industrial, consecrated by the shadow of the Protection Society in 1884, in the form of a pamphlet entitled "The Bechuanas, the Cape Colony, and the Transvaal."

the British flag. The Republic which was so vehemently denounced remains intact, and, the office of Transvaal calumniator having been transferred from missionary to speculator, has within the last two years, or a little more, given forcible evidence of its ability to protect its interests and its independence against both insidious intrigue and organised assault.

Nevertheless, in spite of the agitation set on foot by the supporters of missionary enterprise, the Transvaal delegates secured most important concessions. One thing, it has always to be remembered, the British Government steadfastly refused to do. It refused to regard the new Convention as an agreement between two equal contracting parties. It is only right to keep this fact in mind, for whatever may be the practical effect of the provisions of the London Convention, there was no theoretical consent to regard it as otherwise than unilateral. In a draft treaty submitted to Lord Derby the Transvaal delegates claimed the admission of the principle of arbitration in the event of any disagreement arising as to the proper interpretation of the Convention; and although there is no explicit refusal on the part of the British Government to admit such a principle, there is nowhere any evidence of its acceptance. Whether it is just and politic to refuse to go to arbitration, whether the situation is

not morally one which suggests and justifies an appeal to arbitration in the event of a dispute, whether indeed arbitration has not been in one instance resorted to—these are distinct questions in themselves. The fact has to be recognised that in the London Convention there is no appearance of an agreement to arbitrate, while the correspondence tends to show that a proposal pointing to arbitration was not accepted by the British Government. No matter, then, how reasonably an appeal to arbitration may be contended for as a moral right, that right is not definitely recognised in the wording of the London Convention.

The question of the Suzerainty, too, remains in the same sort of doubtful position. In a practical sense it may be fearlessly asserted that if a Suzerainty existed by reason of the Pretoria Convention, it ceased to exist as soon as the London Convention came into force. The chief differences between the Pretoria and London Conventions are differences that exclude from the latter nearly all the powers reserved to the British Government in the former. The right to move troops through the country disappears. The powers of a British Resident—or rather Agent—are strictly limited to such as belong to the office of a consul. All claim to interfere in the domestic policy of the Republic is withdrawn. The Republic is left perfectly free to conduct its

own diplomatic correspondence with foreign Governments, and to appoint its own agents at foreign courts. The only trace of any British control is to be found in the provision, as set forth in Article 4 of the London Convention, requiring the Transvaal Government to submit for the approval of the British Government, on "completion," all treaties with foreign States, the British Government being limited in the exercise of its power of veto by considerations as to whether any proposed treaty is in conflict with British interests in South Africa or elsewhere.

That, from the date of the signing of the London Convention to a period some twelve months after the Jameson raid, there was a general belief on both sides that the Suzerainty had disappeared, there can be no doubt whatever. The most potent argument in favour of the view that it has not disappeared seems to lie in the fact that though the Articles of the London Convention were substituted for the Articles of the Pretoria Convention, the preamble to the Pretoria Convention, in which distinct reference is made to the Suzerainty, was not cancelled by the substitution in respect of the Articles. On the other hand, a great deal must be regarded as dependant on the explanation of a Suzerainty as given by the British representatives when the terms of peace were being discussed at

Laing's Nek. The minutes of those proceedings contain the following passage: "General Wood proposed to insert in his definition of Suzerainty that the Suzerain had the right to move troops through the vassal State, in case war rendered it necessary. To this the Boer leaders entirely agreed, but on the suggestion of Dr. Jorissen that it was an admitted prerogative of the Suzerain, it was generally decided that it was unnecessary to insert it."¹ In spite of this expression of opinion, the right of the Suzerain to move troops through the country was expressly set forth in the second Article of the Pretoria Convention,² to disappear entirely from the substituted Articles of the London Convention. Now, on the supposition that, as generally agreed on both sides at Laing's Nek, it is part of the prerogative of the Suzerain to move troops through the country, it would certainly seem that the express abandonment of this right—for there can be no doubt of the complete and deliberate substitution of one set of Articles for the other set—involves also the disappearance of the Suzerainty, even though the reference to the Suzerainty remains in the preamble of the Pretoria Convention, and is possibly, though in an indirect manner, extended over the London Convention.

¹ Blue Book C—3114, p. 54.

² Ibid.; p. 39.

The question at issue is—"What does a Suzerainty mean? What does it imply?" And if it is found that, in the opinion of international lawyers, the conditions existing in the South African Republic are not the conditions that prevail under a Suzerainty, then the Suzerainty of Great Britain over the South African Republic has ceased to exist, and those persons are guilty of a grave diplomatic error who assert that it is still in force.

In spite, however, of the popular feeling stirred up against them, and notwithstanding the absence of clear definition on some points of importance, Mr. Kruger and his co-delegates had, as has been said, great reason to be satisfied with the results of their negotiations. What perhaps gave them the deepest satisfaction was the discovery that, under the regime of Lord Derby, they were not only treated with the utmost courtesy, but clearly in the light of a desire to arrive at a permanently satisfactory and friendly settlement. The mere fact that the London Convention was drawn up in duplicate—one copy in Dutch and the other in English—supplied a marked contrast with the circumstances attending the conclusion of the Pretoria Convention, while Lord Derby's anxiety, pending the ratification of the London Convention, to accord the delegates full liberty to negotiate foreign treaties for themselves was especially appreciated. These

foreign negotiations chiefly had reference to the railway from Delagoa Bay, and in order to prosecute them the delegates paid visits to Holland and to Lisbon, besides making a brief trip to Berlin. The earnest adoption by Mr. Kruger of the railway policy initiated by President Burgers bears admirable testimony to his far-sightedness in political matters, the testimony being supplemented by the efforts privately made from Capetown to induce the Volksraad to decide that the original concession for the railway had lapsed.

The Transvaal deputation arrived at the Hague in the beginning of March, 1884, the London Convention having been signed on the 27th of February. There they were well received. After a short stay they proceeded to Amsterdam, under escort of members of a reception committee, the remainder of which welcomed them at the Amsterdam railway terminus in great state and with much cordiality, the presence of the Volunteer band and the plentiful display of Transvaal colours lending gaiety to the occasion. An official reception by the Burgomaster followed, other functions including an exhibition by the fire brigade, at which General Smit sustained the reputation of the Transvaal as a country of marksmen by firing from a carbine, in pursuance of some new life-saving experiments, a bolt with a rope attached through the roof-window of one of

the neighbouring buildings. A tour through northern Holland, visits to Antwerp and Rotterdam, and the above-mentioned visit to Berlin, where the delegates were cordially received by the Emperor William I., served both to bring the Transvaal into European notice and to give the deputation interesting impressions of Europe. Paris, too, where they were entertained at a dinner presided over by the late M. de Lesseps, was not left out of the list of excursions. The visit to Lisbon, whither the delegates were accompanied by Messrs. Beelaerts van Blokland and Maarschalk (the latter one of the holders of the Delagoa Bay railway concession), had reference almost purely to business. The object of the visit was to conclude, if possible, a convention with the Portuguese Government or with Colonel McMurdo, the holder of the concession for the Portuguese section of the Delagoa Bay railway, by virtue of which the Transvaal Government might be able to work its own line from the border free from exactions on the part of McMurdo. Beyond this, it was deemed desirable to make some alterations in the commercial treaty with Portugal which President Burgers had concluded in 1875, and especially to assure the continuance of certain articles of that treaty during the whole term of the concession for the Delagoa Bay railway.

On the 17th of May, 1884, after a stay of ten days in Lisbon, Mr. Kruger was able to sign the new Articles of the commercial treaty, and a declaration was arrived at that, if Colonel McMurdo should refuse to come to an equitable arrangement about a through railway tariff, a concession should be given to the Transvaal Government for building and working a tramway from Lourenço Marques to the border of the Republic. Both these documents, there is every reason to believe, have been of great service; for, though they had no direct effect, they exercised a most useful restraint upon Colonel McMurdo. The commercial treaty, it may be noted, expires whenever the railway concession is revoked—a fact which is not without its importance in connection with discussions of a very much later date.

One more result of Mr. Kruger's visit to Holland may be alluded to—viz., the securing for the Republic of the services, first of all in the capacity of State Attorney, of Dr. Leyds, who had then just taken his doctor's degree at the Amsterdam University. The selection has been fully justified by the result. For nearly fourteen years Dr. Leyds has been the faithful and indefatigable servant of the Republic, and, though he may have his enemies, no one has ever doubted as to the value and sincerity of his services.

CHAPTER VIII

KRUGER AND THE GOLDFIELDS

THE conclusion of the London Convention, by virtue of which the Transvaal secured the abolition of conditions which had been felt as a serious grievance, coincided with occurrences which were then, and are still, largely made use of for the purpose of keeping alive a prejudice against the Government of the Republic. These occurrences arose in one case from the injudicious delimitation of the Western frontier of the Republic, and in the other case from the anarchy prevailing in Zululand through the mistaken policy of the Natal Government with regard to that country. In both cases the occurrences were of almost precisely the same nature. Contending tribes or factions of natives enlisted the services of Transvaal burghers or British subjects, offering farms in payment. On the Western frontier the injudicious cutting off from the Republic of a portion of the land belonging to the chief Massouw left him open to the attack of

his old enemy Mankoroane, who enjoyed the distinction of having become the special favourite of the missionary enterprise represented by the Rev. John Mackenzie. Massouw, as an old ally of the Transvaal, had without doubt a special right to the protection of the Pretoria Government. That protection, however, could not be granted without danger of the Transvaal Government interfering in matters beyond its own borders. Massouw, however, engaged the services of a number of Transvaal burghers living near the border, and with their assistance completely routed Mankoroane. The European allies were rewarded with farms in that chief's territory, and proceeded to found the Republic of Stellaland, with a capital at Vryburg.

On the border between the Transvaal and Zululand almost precisely the same thing had taken place. Owing to the unfortunate mistakes made by the Natal Government in respect of Zulu policy Zululand had been for more than twelve months a prey to bloodshed and anarchy. The chiefs and tribes who had remained faithful to Cetshwayo, as representing to them the house of Chaka, had been continually harried by the chief Usibepu, who, though most unworthily, enjoyed the sympathy and support of the Natal Government. Cetshwayo, driven from his home only a few months after his restoration, had died in a fresh captivity.

Under these conditions the chiefs of his party, acting in the name of Cetywayo's son Dinizulu, applied for assistance to the Transvaal burghers living near the border, offering a large block of farms as the price of the services to be rendered. The offer was accepted, and, under the leadership of Mr. Lucas Meyer—now a member of the First Volksraad in Pretoria—a considerable force of border farmers entered Zululand. Their mission was perfectly successful. Usibepu was totally defeated in a pitched battle and had to fly for his life, and for the time being order was restored in Zululand. The farmers, placed in possession of their promised lands, forthwith established a small State under the title of the New Republic, with a capital at the newly laid-out township of Vryheid.

These proceedings in Zululand were viewed by the British Government with complete indifference. The Zulus, and especially the section that supported Cetywayo's successor, were in bad odour both with the Natal Government and the Colonial Office. They had few friends in England and many active and influential enemies in Natal. Hence the alienation of any part of their country caused no concern. On the contrary, it was probably regarded as a proper punishment for their act in venturing to call in assistance from the Transvaal, with which, after a short interval, the New Republic was incor-

porated. On the Western border of the Transvaal, however, the state of things was very different. The chief Mankoroane was the special favourite of the forces then dominating at the Colonial Office—the forces represented by the public meeting at the Mansion House in November, 1883. Mr. Mackenzie, who had so extravagantly lauded up Mankoroane before the English public, had been appointed to an official position in connection with Bechuanaland. Thus it came to pass that, while the action of the Transvaal burghers in Zululand was tacitly assented to, no language could be found strong enough against those Transvaal burghers who had founded the Republic of Stellaland. “Filibusters” and “freebooters” were the mildest names applied to them, while the Transvaal Government was openly, though not officially, accused of seeking by means of these so-called lawless adventurers to extend the frontiers of the Republic. So loud was the uproar that even the High Commissioner—Sir Hercules Robinson—prudent and cautious man as he was, was misled by it, and, discouraging the efforts of Cape Ministers to settle the difficulty, was induced to sanction steps which a very short time after he found reason to regret. What tended to complicate the situation, on one hand was the agitation set on foot in towns of the Cape Colony by an organisation that took the name of the

"Empire League," the prime mover in which was Mr. J. W. Leonard, an ex-Cape Minister. What tended to complicate the situation on the other side was the act of a Transvaal official—none other than the Superintendent of Education, Mr. S. J. du Toit—in planting the Republican flag on territory beyond the Transvaal frontier. The act was at once disowned by the responsible officials in Pretoria, but nevertheless, coupled with the agitation promoted in the Cape Colony, it had the effect of inducing the belief in England that a show of military force on the Western frontier of the Transvaal was necessary, and as a consequence an expedition to Bechuanaland was organised under the command of Sir Charles Warren.

Sir Charles Warren arrived at the Cape at the end of 1884. By that time, however, it had become evident to Sir Hercules Robinson and all moderately minded people in South Africa that so far from the policy represented by the Warren expedition being approved in the Cape Colony, the great majority of the colonists condemned it utterly, and that any attempt either to expel the Stellaland settlers by force or to pick a quarrel with the South African Republic would be in the highest degree unpopular. This was owing to two causes. First, the true facts of the situation in Bechuanaland were far better understood in South Africa than in

England ; next, the strongest objection was entertained against the establishment of a missionary *régime* possessed of official powers and responsibilities. The first outcome of this strong feeling was traceable in the exercise of pressure that left Mr. Mackenzie no alternative but to resign his newly created office. The next visible result was the complete muzzling of Sir Charles Warren's expedition and its withdrawal at the earliest possible moment. For appearances' sake it proceeded into Bechuanaland, to find everything perfectly orderly and quiet, the respectability of the settlers in Stellaland being testified to by the Imperial Secretary to the High Commissioner. No attempt whatever was made to disturb them in the occupation of their farms, and after an interview with President Kruger, of which no public record exists, and after an ill-judged and abortive attempt to prosecute a Mr. van Niekirk for the alleged murder of an Englishman some two years previously, Sir Charles Warren left South Africa to become Chief Commissioner of Police in London. In the end Bechuanaland became a British Colony, the Government of which was not long in reducing to

¹ Mr. van Niekirk, who died not long ago while holding the office of Commissioner of Police at Johannesburg, belonged to quite the best type of Transvaal burghers, and had the respect of all who knew him.

humility the very chiefs whose interests had been so enthusiastically advocated at the Mansion House meeting.

A new era was about to dawn on South Africa—an era of prosperity ushered in by two years of commercial depression; an era of conflict ushered in by the apparently successful establishment of the principles of South African unity. Both the prosperity and the conflict resulted from the discovery of the rich gold deposits at Witwatersrand, the revelation of the prosperity, however, preceding the revelation of the conflict. In the meantime, in the midst of the commercial depression, a sense of South African unity and nationality had been developing in a manner which could scarcely have been foreseen five or six years previously. The Afrikaner Bond, having survived the suspicion with which it was at first regarded, had come to be recognised as a legitimate and powerful factor in South African affairs, aiming always at the maintenance of a true South African policy, without any thought of diminishing the lawful and constitutional authority of the British Imperial Government. Without any sense either of humiliation or apprehension, colonists of British descent acknowledged the weight and influence of the Dutch-speaking population of the country, and rejoiced in the thought of a unity of races for the achievement of worthy ends.

Imperial interference in South African affairs, it was felt and believed, had come to an end, and the South African States would be at liberty to work in harmony for the realisation of a rich national future. It was regarded as expressive of this happy state of things when, in 1887, on the occasion of the Queen's Jubilee, Mr. Hofmeyr, the leader of the Afrikaner party in the Cape Colony, visited England, and was everywhere welcomed as at one and the same time, the representative of a great South African ideal and a loyal citizen of a British Colony. Nor did the increasing influence and popularity of Mr. Kruger appear as in any respect antagonistic with the principles expressed in Mr. Hofmeyr's visit to England. Since the conclusion of the London Convention everything had gone with perfect smoothness between London and Pretoria. A thoroughly friendly understanding, in the presence of which the recollection of ~~former~~ differences might readily die away, seemed to have been established, and Mr. Kruger's re-election to the Presidency in 1888, by 4,483 votes to 834 recorded for Mr. Piet Joubert, appeared in the light both of a just recognition of his public services and a guarantee for a prolonged prosperity. For the first time, in fact, since the Republics were established, it seemed as if an approach to the long-dreamed-of South African unity were about to assume a practical shape.

Meantime the discovery of the gold reefs at Witwatersrand had given an impulse to commercial activity far in excess of that which had resulted from the discovery of the diamond-fields some fifteen or sixteen years previously. The imports and the revenue of the two British Colonies advanced by leaps and bounds. Railways that had been hardly earning more than their working expenses became remunerative. The new settlement at Johannesburg, as it was quickly named, at once displaced the already decaying Kimberley as the centre of South African hopes. The door of the South African Republic stood hospitably open to every man, no matter what his nationality, who was drawn thither in search of fortune. It did not occur to any one either in the Republic or outside it that there should be, or could be, any difficulty in crossing its border. Its burghers were blood-relatives of the loyal Afrikaners of the Cape Colony and Natal, as well as of the friendly Afrikaners of the Orange Free State. Its Government was on the most cordial terms with the Government of the British Empire. Its leading officials were men of repute. Its system of law was the same as that prevailing throughout the rest of South Africa. There was no reason why the South African Republic should not become a home for men of all nationalities, who, while

finding new openings for their enterprise, would be content to live under its Government and its laws.

The Transvaal Government made no attempt to interfere with the stream of newcomers into the country. Like the Government of the Orange Free State, it was prepared to welcome immigration, so long only as no danger to the independence of the Republic was involved. For the first year or two everything worked harmoniously. The new population were too much engaged in opening mines, or speculating in mines that remained to be opened, to pay any attention to their general position in the country or to criticise the acts of the Government. Officials being civil, personal grievances did not arise. As for what was done in the way of speculation, in many cases the less said the better. If gold properties could not be found, they were invented. Any piece of swamp that stood within reasonable distance of what ~~was~~ believed to be the line of the main reef could be made the foundation of a prospectus. To get in "on the ground floor"—i.e., to obtain large allotments of one pound shares at ten shillings each, and to unload these shares at any price, ranging from twenty shillings to thirty—became the ideal of happiness. Every property was announced as a two-ounce property at least, and in a certain number of cases something was done by digging trenches

towards giving an impression of practical mining. The game, however, could not last. By the end of 1888 the share-market was in a state of collapse, and before the year 1889 was half over, the losses through speculation and the check given to an unduly inflated trade had begun to suggest the idea that something must be wrong with the Transvaal Government.

Johannesburg had, there can be no doubt, just then reached a critical stage. It was almost a toss-up whether or not the place should be abandoned. Hardly an attempt had been made in the way of scientific mining. The expenses of gold-mining were heavy, and, as it became more and more clear that two-ounce properties were for the most part mythical, the hopes of profitable working became paler and paler. Meantime the cost of living was excessive. Almost everything in the shape of building materials, and most articles of general consumption, had to be imported from overseas, either through the Cape Colony or Natal. For some distance such supplies could be conveyed by railway—as far as Kimberley in the case of the Cape Colony; as far as Ladysmith in the case of Natal. Between the railway termini at these two places and the new town of Johannesburg there intervened between two and three hundred miles of country which could only be traversed, so far

as merchandise was concerned, by ox-wagon. An unusually dry winter in 1889 was prolonged far beyond the date at which the spring rains are generally to be looked for. The grass along the routes, on which ox-wagon transport depends, began to disappear. Every week, every day, the difficulties of conveying merchandise became greater. Fears of famine arose in Johannesburg; such fears being enhanced by the unprincipled conduct of speculators who did their best to send up prices by the formation of "rings" and "corners." A cry arose from Johannesburg for the construction of railways, and, in the absence of any one else to blame, the Government of the South African Republic was accused of delaying and hindering such construction. "As a matter of fact, no accusation could have been more unjust, for, with a gap of some 250 miles between Johannesburg and the termini of the colonial lines, railway construction in the Transvaal would at the moment have been of but little service. The sympathies of the Pretoria Government, however, were entirely with the people in Johannesburg, and it took what steps it could to deal with the situation that had arisen. It invited the other South African Governments to join with it in praying for rain, and, acting more practically, offered premiums to the transport riders who should first arrive in Johannesburg with their wagons. Rain

fell in time to prevent the situation from reaching a still more critical stage. Johannesburg was saved from famine, and the action taken by the Government was, by the great majority of Johannesburg residents, duly appreciated.

With the opening of the year 1890, the market for gold shares still remained depressed, while the monthly output from the mines showed but little inclination to increase. Like Mr. Kruger's monkey that incautiously burnt its tail, the less reasoning population of the great gold-mining centre displayed an increasing disposition to turn round upon the Government. Rumours, for the most part grossly exaggerated, of plots and revolutionary movements began to penetrate into neighbouring States. Some slight colour seemed for the moment to be given to these rumours by an incident that occurred early in March, 1890, on the occasion of Mr. Kruger's first visit to Johannesburg at the invitation of the leading residents. The visit passed off, on the whole, very well. Mr. Kruger, as head of the Government, was very cordially received, and even if a section of the crowd, on his appearance on a balcony, began to sing "God save the Queen," there can be little doubt that it was sincerely intended, by men ignorant of the Transvaal national song, as a compliment. Later in the evening, however, either by accident or through love of mischief, the Transvaal

flag, which was flying on the staff in front of the magistrate's office, disappeared.

The news of this incident, flying quickly round the country, created the greatest excitement and indignation among the burghers, who, with the memories of the annexation comparatively fresh in their minds, found it difficult to resist the conviction that some new attempt on their independence was in contemplation. Mr. Kruger, however, from the very first moment acted with a calmness and judgment which were worthy of all admiration. Repressing, at some considerable trouble, the resentment of his burghers, he made up his mind that none of the reputable inhabitants of Johannesburg were, or could be, concerned in such an act, and that it was a momentary piece of mischief on the part of some irresponsible persons who were probably somewhat the worse for liquor. He accordingly proceeded on his way to meet, by arrangement, the new High Commissioner—Sir Henry Loch—at a spot near the Transvaal frontier, and, on his return to Pretoria a few weeks later, took the earliest possible opportunity of impressing on the public his view of what had passed. It was all owing, he declared, to the "long drinks" in which Johannesburgers were in the habit of indulging, and he did not intend that the respectable inhabitants of the mining city should be

saddled with responsibility in respect of a matter with which they had nothing to do.

The sincerity of this expression of opinion, and the resolve of Mr. Kruger, as the most influential factor in the Government, to deal as liberally as possible with the new interests that had arisen in the country, were abundantly proved when the Volksraad met in the ensuing May. Three measures of importance, all designed for the improvement of the position of the gold-mining industry, and those directly or indirectly engaged in it, were submitted to the Volksraad. These measures aimed at (1) the immediate construction of railways; (2) the beneficial amendment of the existing gold-laws; and (3) the commencement of legislation through which the stranger within the gates of the Republic might acquire a political interest in the country. The resolution of the Volksraad in favour of the construction of railways was carried by acclamation, the lines sanctioned being planned so as to provide the very earliest possible railway connection with the railway system of the Cape Colony. By a large majority the Volksraad agreed to the amendments in the Gold Law suggested by the heads of the mining interest in Johannesburg. When the proposal for granting political privileges to the new population, through the creation of a Second Volksraad, came to be dis-

cussed, some considerable opposition was shown by some of the older members of the Raad on the score of what had occurred in Johannesburg two or three months previously. The objections raised were, however, warmly combated by Mr. Kruger, who forcibly urged that it would be in the highest degree unjust to make the many suffer for the fault of the few. The proposal, therefore, for the creation of a Second Volksraad, its members elected on a more liberal franchise than that already in use, was agreed to. It has been since complained that this enlarging of the franchise was illusive, by reason of the limitations imposed on the powers of the Second Volksraad. It must, however, be kept in mind that, while no reform in the representative system is achieved in any country save by gradual changes, the proposal accepted by the Volksraad in 1890 was intended by Mr. Kruger as a first step towards further reforms, which were interrupted and rendered impossible by causes which will be immediately traced. And the significant fact, moreover, remains that for all these reforms both the Executive and the Volksraad were warmly thanked by the Johannesburg Chamber of Mines, representing the great mass of the gold-mining population of Johannesburg.

* There is thus ample ground for the statement

See Report of the Chamber of Mines for 1890. •

that, up to the middle of the year 1890, both the Transvaal Volksraad and the Transvaal Executive, acting under Mr. Kruger's inspiration, were animated with nothing but the most friendly feelings towards the new population that had been attracted into the country, and did their best to make the position of that new population not only tolerable but in every way satisfactory. Meantime, earlier in the year, the Government had shown its regard for the welfare of the general interests of the Rand by taking steps to render impossible any renewal, in the approaching winter, of that disposition to create famine which had made its appearance in the winter of 1889. In order to render impossible any "rings" or "corners" in respect of the necessities of life, the Government purchased cargoes of Australian flour, to be held at its disposal in the event of any scarcity arising. For this well-considered step the Government was roundly abused by newspapers representing the interests of capitalists who had hoped to profit at the expense of the great mass of the population. That, however, was only to be expected.

CHAPTER IX.

KRUGER AND RHODES

UP to the middle of the year 1890, then, there was nothing in the relations between the mining and commercial population in Johannesburg and the Pretoria Government that was inconsistent with the most complete confidence and cordiality. The flag incident in March, so far from creating any antagonism of feeling, had rather had the effect of increasing the friendliness entertained on both sides; for while the great mass of the Johannesburg population had hastened to repudiate the act, the Government and the Volksraad had not been slow to express, through the legislative measures adopted, their confidence in the aims and intentions of the great mass of the Johannesburg population. In one or two quarters, it is true, a cry had been raised in favour of the principle that taxation carried with it the right of representation. Those, however, who raised this cry were not only out of touch with general feeling in Johannesburg, but revealed their

entire misunderstanding of the whole position. In the first place, direct taxation was then, and is still, almost unknown in the Transvaal, and the resident who either ignored or forgot the duty of paying such trivial direct taxes as were in force, as a rule was never subjected to any compulsion. In the next place, the question of the payment of taxes by resident aliens was not a matter of domestic policy, but of international right. Diggers' and prospectors' licenses were charges made for particular privileges conferred, and only those who claimed the privileges were subjected to the cost of the license. Customs duties, moreover, which, as in the Cape Colony and Natal, formed the principal source of revenue, fell upon all consumers alike. Hence the question of representation stood almost wholly apart from the question of taxation, while as regards the question of naturalisation there were very few indeed among the new population who had any desire to forswear their original nationality, nor was any practical advantage to be gained by doing so.

In the midst of the friendliness and confidence existing on both sides, both burghers and aliens suddenly awoke to the fact that the relations between the Government of the Republic and the British Government had become strained, and that demands were being made by the latter, in a peremp-

tory manner, to which the former found it very difficult to accede. The presenting of these demands coincided with the arrival of a new High Commissioner, appointed after a considerable delay, at Capetown, and the accession of Mr. Cecil Rhodes to the office of Premier of the Cape Colony. The conditions were such as to make Mr. Rhodes practically the exponent and agent of Imperial policy in South Africa, even though its official exponent was the High Commissioner, Sir Henry Loch. The opinion of the majority in the Cape Colony governed the South African policy of the Imperial Government, and as Mr. Rhodes, in his capacity as Premier, presumably represented the majority in the Cape Colony, he was able, quite apart from the more personal influence he had acquired in London, to guide, through the High Commissioner, Imperial policy. Beyond this, Mr. Rhodes, as chairman of the powerful corporation known as De Beers, and as the controlling agent of the policy of the Chartered Company, was able to exercise a most powerful personal influence both in England and South Africa. It would be difficult indeed to imagine a more dangerous concentration of power in the hands of one man. It would further be difficult to imagine a more unscrupulous use than that to which this power has been put.

The first article in the political creed of Mr.

Rhodes, at the juncture referred to, was the success and consolidation of that new enterprise in the interior for the development of which the British South Africa Company had been put in possession of a Royal Charter. To obtain this success, it was necessary for him to secure the political support of a majority of Cape colonists, so as not only to range the Colony on his side, but to be able to dictate a policy to the Colonial Office in London. In order, moreover, to be more certainly sure of his ground, the Transvaal Government had to be persuaded or coerced into consenting to a most important change in the arrangements of the London Convention. Under the 4th Article of that Convention, the Transvaal Government, while undertaking to enter into no treaties with native tribes east or west of the Republic except with the consent of the British Government, was left perfectly free with regard to native chiefs to the northward. If, however, the Chartered Company was to be able to pursue its operations in Mashonaland undisturbed, it was necessary that the northern outlet allowed to the Transvaal by the London Convention should be closed. It was with regard to this matter that Mr. Kruger, early in March, 1890, had gone down to a place known as Fourteen Streams, close to the boundary between the Transvaal and Griqualand West (already incorporated with the Cape Colony)

to meet Sir Henry Loch. What actually passed at this meeting has never been fully known. That the conference chiefly related to the closing of the northern outlet of the South African Republic is to be gathered from the fact that Mr. Rhodes, although at that time not yet Premier, took part in it. It was necessary to make Mr. Kruger some appearance, at least, of an offer of a *quid pro quo*. If the Transvaal was to abandon its prospect of an outlet to the north, as provided for by the London Convention, what was it to receive in return? There can be no doubt that compensation was offered in the prospect of the incorporation with the Republic of Swaziland, the acquisition of which had long been desired by the Republican Government. As any map will show, Swaziland, in a geographical sense, belongs to the South African Republic, while the necessity of placing it under some civilised rule had become abundantly apparent. Beyond this there can be no doubt that its incorporation with the Transvaal had been recommended by a British Commissioner—Sir Francis de Winton—who had visited the country prior to the date here alluded to.

Whatever may have actually passed at the conference at Fourteen Streams, there can be no doubt that Mr. Kruger returned to Pretoria under the conviction that the views of the Transvaal Government with regard to Swaziland were to be substantially

met. • There can be little question that the assumed existence of this understanding influenced to some extent both Mr. Kruger and the Volksraad in agreeing so readily to measures in the interest of the new population. Matters being in this favourable position for amicable negotiation, it naturally came as a shock when it was realised that the Imperial Government had suddenly assumed an attitude of marked hostility to the Transvaal, and that all claims of the Republic to be considered in respect of Swazieland were to be forfeited unless an immediate assent were given to Mr. Rhodes's demands. It soon became known that steps were already being taken in Natal for the organisation of a police force to occupy Swazieland in the event of the terms demanded being rejected, while the peremptory and distinctly hostile refusal of the High Commissioner to allow the Transvaal to despatch a Commissioner to discuss the matter in London gave increased significance to the situation. The climax was reached when Major Sapte, Military Secretary to Sir Henry Loch, arrived post haste in Pretoria with the text of a Convention which the Transvaal Government and Volksraad were to immediately accept and ratify, under penalty of the complete forfeiture of those claims with respect to Swazieland which had been fully and officially recognised. This Convention expressed two demands made on the

Transvaal Government by the High Commissioner —first, the surrender of that prospect of expansion to the north which had been left open by the London Convention of 1884; next, the surrender of the commercial independence of the Republic by its becoming a party to the Customs Union entered into a year or two previously by the Cape Colony and the Orange Free State.

It may fairly be said that public feeling in Pretoria, both within the Volksraad and outside it, stood aghast at the nature of these demands and the manner in which they were urged. It was seen at once that it was not the policy of the Imperial Government that was being thus forced upon the Transvaal, but the policy of Mr. Rhodes as representing both the Chartered Company and the Cape Colony. The Chartered Company was, of course, interested in securing a clear field for its operations in the north, free from interference by any possible rivals, and sought to make the Transvaal Government its policeman along the line of the Limpopo River. The Cape Colony was interested to some degree in securing the free importation of colonial wines and brandies into the Transvaal, but in a still greater degree was it anxious to aim a blow, through the Transvaal, at the enterprising Colony of Natal, which had dared to persevere, to the great offence of mercantile interests at the Cape, in a liberal fiscal policy.

The first impulse of the Transvaal Government and Volksraad was to decline utterly to accede to the demands made from Capetown, and all the more so because it was clear that, under cover of an Imperial policy, an assault was being made in purely local interests on the commercial independence of the Republic. What made the position worse, from a Transvaal point of view, was that while under the proposed Convention everything that was asked for was conceded to the Chartered Company, nothing was really conceded to the Transvaal, in respect of Swazieland, except a vague kind of promise to consider the matter again, on certain conditions, at the end of three years. It is not necessary to allude at any length to the negotiations that took place, nor to that somewhat mysterious visit of Mr. Hofmeyr to the Transvaal capital for the alleged object—as his friends have declared—of avoiding a war for which not the very slightest provocation had arisen. It is enough to say that the so-called Swazieland Convention was signed and ratified, on the understanding, however, that the Articles referring to the Customs Union were to remain in suspense. Nevertheless the moral of the whole situation was that the Transvaal Government, which had believed itself to be on perfectly cordial terms with Great Britain, and was prepared in every way to consider the interests of the new population

in a generous spirit, found itself obliged to adopt a defensive policy against an enemy located in South Africa, and apparently supported by the Colonial section of the Afrikaner population.

These are facts which require not only to be considered and understood, but also carefully remembered. They supply the key to the whole political history of the South African Republic for the last seven or eight years. Up to the middle of 1890 there was no real antagonism between the population of Johannesburg and the Government at Pretoria, nor was there any kind of antagonism between the Transvaal Government and Great Britain. In the middle of 1890, however, the Transvaal Government found itself suddenly obliged to adopt a defensive attitude against the hostility of Mr. Rhodes, who unfortunately was able, through his interests both in London and Capetown, to communicate his hostility to the Imperial Government. This hostility of feeling was further expressed in connection with what passed in the succeeding year—1891—in connection with the “trek question.” Early in that year a movement commenced among farmers in the Cape Colony, the Free State, and the Transvaal, to act upon a concession said to have been obtained from certain independent chiefs in Mashonaland, and to “trek” beyond the Limpopo with the view of

founding a Government of their own. Throughout South Africa generally, there did not seem to be much objection to this project. The *Natal Mercury*, a thoroughly representative British journal, went so far as to express the opinion that the rights of the Chartered Company were not one whit more tenable than the rights said to be conferred by the concession under which the "trekkers" were acting.¹ Once more, however, the High Commissioner, acting really as the agent of the Chartered Company, threatened pains and penalties against the Transvaal. By a singular perversion of the principles of justice, the Transvaal Government was to be held responsible, not only for the acts of its own burghers, but for the acts of Free Staters and Cape colonists, who might be disposed to join the movement northwards. Under such pressure, and for the sake of peace, Mr. Kruger issued a proclamation which had the effect, to use a phrase that has since become historic, of "damping the trek." With a view to testing the situation, a certain number of the would-be "trekkers" travelled with their wagons to the Limpopo Drift, the most notable man among them being a Mr. Van Soelen, a well-to-do resident of Ladybrand, a small town in the Free State. No attempt whatever was made to cross the river

¹ *Natal Mercury*, May 18, 1891.

the "trekkers" being content with ascertaining that their presence as a body in Mashonaland was not desired by the Chartered Company.

One of the most notable features of public feeling at this juncture was apparent in the strong antagonism that arose between a large section of Cape Colony Afrikaners and Transvaal burghers. In 1884 the Cape Afrikaners had put a constitutional brake on the wheels of Imperial policy in Bechuanaland. In 1891 the feeling of Cape Afrikaners towards the Transvaal was in many cases bitterly hostile. It was no uncommon thing to hear Cape Afrikaners resident in the South African Republic make use of expressions of this kind: "We shall not stop another Warren expedition from invading the Transvaal." In club circles in Pretoria this sense of hostility almost led, in some cases, to personal violence. The fact is, Mr. Rhodes had cleverly led Cape Afrikaners to believe that their whole future was involved in the Chartered Company's success in opening out Mashonaland and Matabeleland; and that Mr. Kruger and the Pretoria Volksraad were enemies who sought to bar the way. Then, too, the strong opposition shown by the Transvaal to the proposal to force it, by Imperial pressure, into a Customs Union with the Cape Colony and the Free State, was resented, very unreasonably, by agricultural interests in the

Colony. It had been hoped that if the Transvaal could be forced into such a union, Cape wines and brandies, already enjoying immense advantages within the Colony, would have been able to enter the Transvaal duty free. Beyond this, the fact was very keenly realised that if only the Transvaal could be forced into the existing Customs Union, Natal would be compelled to follow suit, and, in following suit, be compelled to abandon the low scale of Customs duties which made the smaller Colony a very formidable rival of the larger in respect of the import trade of the Transvaal. To put it shortly, the Cape Colony scheme for the commercial fettering of the Transvaal fell through. It would have suited Mr. Rhodes well enough if he could have bound the Afrikaner vote closer to himself by securing a free market in the Transvaal for Cape wines and brandies, and putting an end to the commercial competition of Natal. As, however, that was impossible, he dropped the proposal and contented himself with the agreement that not only closed the northern outlet to the Transvaal but imposed upon the Transvaal Government the duty of preventing the intrusion of others into the area of the Chartered Company's operations.

The antagonism established between the Transvaal burghers and the Afrikaners of the Cape Colony is particularly worth noting by reason of

the claim often made on Mr. Rhodes's behalf to the effect that he has persuaded Dutch and English in South Africa to work together as friends. No claim could be more absolutely devoid of foundation. Quite irrespective of the friendly relations existing between the two races prior to 1887, it is absolutely certain that in that year there was a complete blending of the two for political and all other purposes. So far from introducing harmony between them, Mr. Rhodes introduced discord. Nor has he only introduced discord between the Dutch and English races. He has succeeded—or rather he did succeed for a time—in introducing discord among the Dutch race throughout South Africa, and in arraying one section of it against the other. This state of things came to an end owing to the revelations made in connection with the Jameson raid, when the Cape Afrikanders discovered, to their amazement, that Mr. Rhodes had deceived them and, through deceiving them, had been seeking to make use of them as a means for coercing their kinsfolk in the South African Republic. It is illustrative of Mr. Rhodes's power as an influence of discord, and not as an influence for harmony, that the very moment which restored the unity of the Dutch race in South Africa brought out into still greater prominence the antagonism which, thanks to him, has been established between Dutch and British.

It is of the utmost importance that the effect of the appearance of Mr. Rhodes on the scene in 1890, in the guise of a South African force, should be understood. The hostile disposition at once displayed, through his intervention, both by the Imperial Government and the Cape Colony towards the South African Republic, compelled the Republic to exchange a policy of cordiality for a policy of most vigilant defence. The extent of Mr. Rhodes's power, owing to the support accorded him both in London and Capetown, was as well understood as his ingrained animosity. An enemy so determined and so full of resources had to be guarded against at every point. To a man of Mr. Kruger's shrewdness and penetration the possibilities of the situation were plain, and it became his daily and patriotic duty to keep watch at all corners of the fortress of the Republic's independence. A change in commercial policy might jeopardise that independence in one way. The granting of political privileges might jeopardise it in another. The knowledge that there was a powerful and industrious enemy ever keeping watch outside the gates created an obvious necessity for keeping watch within. It is the experience of the last seven or eight years that has stamped upon Mr. Kruger's features that character of watchfulness which has struck so many who have had the opportunity of

meeting him. This is the picture that has to be placed before the mind as expressing the situation in the Transvaal from the middle of 1890 to the present day—Mr. Rhodes ever on the alert to assail and overthrow the independence of the Republic, with Mr. Kruger ever on the alert to defend it; Mr. Rhodes having at his back unlimited command of money and, in case of need, the whole resources of the British Empire; while Mr. Kruger has had to rely solely on a sense of the justice of his cause and on the rifles of his patriotic burghers.

It was not all at once that there arose an evident connection between the hostility of Mr. Rhodes and the action of those in Johannesburg who subsequently took openly upon themselves the rôle of political reformers. The sapping and mining had to be cautiously carried on, more especially between the years 1892 and 1893, when a Liberal Ministry was in office in England. Nevertheless the sense became universal of the presence of a strong and aggressive power lying behind the interests of capitalists in Johannesburg—a power which was only waiting for a convenient opportunity to assert itself. There was, too, another consideration that kept hostile movements in check—consideration of the necessity laid upon Cape colonists to make use of the Transvaal Government for the purpose of

enabling them to compete on better terms with Natal for the import trade of Johannesburg. It was for this reason that, in spite of the friction between Pretoria and Capetown that occurred in the earlier part of the year 1891, over the "trek" question, efforts were made from Capetown to induce the Pretoria Government to facilitate the rapid extension of the Cape railway system right into Johannesburg. Had Mr. Kruger been possessed of that hostility towards the Cape Colony which has been attributed to him, he had reason enough to discourage any such negotiations. As it was, his regard for the interests of Johannesburg, his sense of the necessity for establishing railway communication between the Rand and the sea-coast, at the earliest possible moment, induced him to enter willingly into the scheme, and to agree to a Convention which enabled the Cape Colony to run trains into Johannesburg within nine months of the conclusion of the agreement. For a time, the quiet but incessant campaign against the Transvaal partially vanished from sight. Nevertheless, it did not cease, nor was there any cessation of Mr. Kruger's vigilance. As, indeed, was shortly to be made clear, the apparent pause was only the prelude to a more determined attack.

CHAPTER X

KRUGER AND THE "REFORMERS"

THE years 1892 and 1893 passed over, so far as the antagonism between the Transvaal and the Cape Colony was concerned, in comparative quietude. There were two good reasons for this. In the first place, the Cape Government—the Government of which Mr. Rhodes was the head—was so much interested in the rapid extension of its railway system to Johannesburg that it found it worth while to preserve, for the time, the most cordial relations with Pretoria. There was always the danger that, if any hitch arose, the Transvaal Government might not only delay this extension, but might, by immediately favouring the claims of Natal to direct railway connection with the Rand, deprive the Cape Colony of the advantages it expected to reap through the diversion of the Johannesburg trade from the Natal route. •For,

although Durban, the port of Natal, is very considerably nearer to Johannesburg than any port in the Cape Colony, the longer route would be preferred if only the whole distance could be covered by rail. The extent to which, for a limited period, the Cape Colony profited by the diversion of trade from the Natal route can be gathered from the fact that whereas in 1889, prior to the extension of the Cape line to Johannesburg, the Natal railway system was earning a dividend of over 7½ per cent. on the capital invested, the average dividend for the years 1892 to 1894, inclusive, after the extension of the Cape line, was only 2½ per cent.

Besides the desire to see the Cape Colony benefitted by the extension of its railway system under the most favourable conditions, Mr. Rhodes was, in 1892 and 1893, busy in establishing his enterprise in the interior, and had not time to concern himself very much for the moment about matters in the Transvaal. That the ultimate intention of making a serious attack on the Transvaal was never given up is, however, beyond a doubt. There were quiet yet active preparations going on beneath the surface, in which persons who afterwards held a prominent place among the Johannesburg "reformers" were interesting themselves. In spite of denials that have from time to time been put forth, there can be no doubt that in 1893, the question

of providing financial support to the organisation known as the Transvaal National Union had been discussed among Johannesburg capitalists and a decision arrived at, and if the proposal hung fire it was chiefly because it was feared that the Liberal Ministry then in office in England would not be sufficiently sympathetic. There was, besides, in all probability another reason for abstaining, between 1892 and 1894, from any obvious agitation. The Transvaal presidential election was due to take place early in 1893, and the hope was entertained that that election might result in the displacing of Mr. Kruger, and the election of Commandant-General Joubert. The sturdy independence of Mr. Kruger's character was well known, while on the other hand it was probable that Mr. Joubert, whatever his intentions might be, would prove, as had been shown in his negotiations with Sir Evelyn Wood in 1881, a man of wax in the hands of any one capable of exercising any powerful influence or pressure. If any obvious agitation were kept up from Johannesburg against the Pretoria Government, Mr. Kruger's return would be certain, for the sense of danger would lead the great majority of burghers to vote for the man whom they could safely trust. If, on the other hand, the alien population remained quiet, internal disagreements might give Mr. Joubert a better chance. There was, as

it happened, one question of domestic dispute which, if left to assume comparative prominence, was calculated to produce considerable division of feeling, viz., the question of the relations between the two Dutch churches, the "Reformed" Church, and the so-called "Dopper" Church. The dispute had acquired a certain extra degree of sharpness owing to a question of church property having become involved. Mr. Joubert found his support amid the ranks of the "Reformed" Church, while Mr. Kruger's adherents were those of the more independent and Calvinistic body. That the opponents of Mr. Kruger were not altogether wrong in relying on the influence of this ecclesiastical dispute is shown by the election returns, 7,881 votes having been given for Mr. Kruger, 7,009 for Mr. Joubert. A somewhat bitter controversy arose over these returns—a controversy very much resembling that which arose over the contest between Mr. Van Rensburg and Mr. M. W. Pretorius in 1863. Ultimately a scrutiny was ordered, the result of which was to show that Mr. Kruger had for a third time been duly elected.

The year 1893 was marked by occurrences which were not without their influence on subsequent events. Not the least important of these occurrences was the visit paid by Mr. Kruger to Natal, a community which he had not visited since the end of

1878. The visit was paid in response to an urgent invitation from the Natal Government, founded on a resolution of the Legislature. Ever since the discovery of the Witwatersrand goldfields, Natal had been longing for direct railway communication with Johannesburg. The wish for such communication was only natural, seeing that the route to Johannesburg from Durban, although longer than the route from Delagoa Bay, was very considerably shorter than the shortest route from any Cape Colony port. But although geographical facts made in favour of Natal, historical facts seriously handicapped this enterprising Colony. The burghers of the Transvaal could not forget that it was from Natal that proceeded the annexation policy of 1877. Hence Natal was mistrusted, and any movement in that direction was regarded in Pretoria with suspicion. Evidence of this mistrust was revealed when, in 1890, it was suggested to Mr. Kruger that it might be regarded as a friendly act if the Pretoria Government were to congratulate the Natal Government on having at last extended railway communication to the valuable coalfields at Dundee, a locality situated not very far from Rorke's Drift. Dundee, however, was considerably nearer the Transvaal border than the town of Ladysmith, and it had been suggested a year or two previously to the Natal Government by the

Transvaal Government that Natal railways should not be extended beyond Ladysmith except with the consent of the Transvaal Government. The request was disregarded. Hence the moment it was suggested that the Transvaal Government should congratulate the Natal Government on this railway extension to Dundee, Mr. Kruger raised the question as to the general action of Natal in respect of railway matters. "Didn't we," he asked, "request Natal not to extend her railway system for the present beyond Ladysmith? In that case the Natal Government, in making the line to Dundee, has ignored our request, and we should be doing wrong to congratulate it."

Nevertheless, the visit of Mr. Kruger to Natal in 1893 was a great success, and perhaps all the more so by reason of the fact that Natal was just then concerned in the adoption of Responsible Government in place of the semi-subjection to the Colonial Office which had prevailed ever since 1856. Much cordiality was manifested on both sides, Natal politicians having in view the desirability of securing direct railway communication with Johannesburg; Mr. Kruger having in view the possibility, or desirability, of making use of Natal in his conflict with the Government of the Cape Colony. Nothing immediate came of the visit, much to the disappointment of Natal colonists.

who complained that though they had piped to Mr. Kruger, he had not danced. It was not long, however, before Natal politicians had reason to believe that their efforts to impress and entertain Mr. Kruger had had the desired effect, for early in 1894 an agreement was arrived at between Natal and the Transvaal, authorising the immediate extension of the Natal railway system to Johannesburg. In making this agreement the Transvaal Government was perforce bound to consider the effect that it might exercise upon the commercial prospects of the Delagoa Bay railway, and hence the Convention expressing the agreement contained clauses governing both the rates to be charged and the division of the traffic. These clauses possessed a practical value, because the line to Pretoria and Johannesburg from Delagoa Bay, which had for some years been struggling through a difficult and fever-stricken country, was visibly approaching completion.

The sanctioning of the railway extension from Natal, coupled with the advance towards completion of the line from Delagoa Bay, was little relished in the capital of the Cape Colony, where it had always been hoped that the Cape railways were secure of a prolonged monopoly of the Johannesburg traffic. Hence it was not surprising to find, in 1894, the hostility of the Cape Colony to the

Transvaal assuming a more active and positive shape. In 1871 the Cape Colony had contended that, as the most powerful State in South Africa, it ought to be placed in possession of the Griqualand West diamond-fields. In 1894 the Cape Colony began to claim that, as the State possessing the largest public debt, it ought to be enabled to make specially advantageous arrangements, in respect of railway matters, with the South African Republic.

The events that occurred in 1894 are particularly worthy of note as serving to show how completely local were claims and interests which, thanks to the ascendancy obtained by Mr. Rhodes, were represented in England as possessing an Imperial significance. The supreme stake for which Mr. Rhodes was playing becomes apparent at a later stage. In the meantime the necessity was laid upon him of retaining popular support in the Cape Colony. Possessed of that support he might feel secure of the support also of the Imperial Government; without it he would be in grave danger of being repudiated and neglected. The time had arrived, therefore, for the Cape Government, as represented by Mr. Rhodes, to make fresh complaints against the South African Republic. The nature of these complaints was first made manifest when, in the latter part of 1894, Mr. Laing, who held the office of Commissioner of Works in the

second Rhodes Administration, proceeded to Pretoria with a demand that the Transvaal should arrange for a general "pooling" of railway receipts from the Rand traffic, out of which 50 per cent. should be allotted to the Cape Colony, the Natal and Delagoa Bay routes dividing the remainder between them. This proposal, which, it is easy to see, was devised with the object of taking the wind out of the sails of the competition threatened from Durban and Delagoa Bay, was promptly rejected as preposterous. What it meant was that the natural geographical routes to Johannesburg should be placed at an artificial disadvantage in the interest of routes which, on an average, were fully 100 per cent. longer than the route through Delagoa Bay. It has been asserted that the Cape Colony ought to have been met more liberally, because it had spent over twenty millions in providing railway communication with Johannesburg. That argument, however, is utterly hollow. The great bulk of the expenditure on railways by the Cape Colony was for the benefit of the diamond industry at Kimberley. Three millions was the utmost that the Cape Colony ever spent for the benefit of the Johannesburg trade, and the great bulk of this was repaid when the Free State Government took over, at the commencement of the year 1897, that portion of the trunk line which runs through Free State

territory. About the same time Mr. Rhodes, while on a visit to Pretoria, renewed the demand, originally made in 1890, that the Transvaal should enter into the existing Customs Union between the Cape Colony and the Free State. It was, it may be assumed, no consideration for the gold-mining industry that prompted this demand. If it had been acceded to Natal would have been compelled to abandon its free trade policy, and to adopt the very much higher tariff accepted by the Customs Union. The competition for the Johannesburg trade would have been killed, with the result of increasing the cost of living to all residents at the Rand. The Transvaal Government, being well aware of what Mr. Rhodes's proposition meant, and that its acceptance would involve a breach of faith with Natal, declined to accede to it, thereby incurring, no doubt, the ill-will of the Cape Government, or rather of Mr. Rhodes.

The campaign against the South African Republic was now, in the latter half of 1894, in full swing. The Transvaal National Union, ceasing to be a sort of harmless debating society for the gratification of the vanity of aspiring politicians in Johannesburg, was transformed into an active agency for the promotion of discontent in the Transvaal, and for the circulation of false

or misleading statements outside it. The large firms of capitalists, which had at first stood aloof, became deeply concerned in its organisation. Possibly it was believed that there would before long be a change of Ministry in England which would render an enterprise against the Transvaal Government more promising. It was about this time that Mr. Lionel Phillips, the most active representative in Johannesburg in the firm of Eckstein & Co.—the firm representing the interests of Mr. Beit—wrote his famous letter in which he alluded to the desirability of a fund for the “improvement” of the Volksraad, and made a pointed allusion to the arming of the alien population. Other events that occurred, moreover, were seized upon, as affording opportunities for undermining the Pretoria Government and prejudicing it in the eyes of the world. The insubordination of a native chief, Malaboch by name, gave rise to the necessity for calling out a “commando,” or burgher force, for his suppression. Among those thus called out for service in the field were a number of British subjects. There can be no question whatever that the Transvaal Government, in thus calling out British subjects, was in every respect acting within its right. It is provided by the fifteenth Article of the London Convention that all persons other than natives, who had

established their domicile in the Republic between the 12th of April, 1877, and the 8th of August, 1881—that is, during the annexation period—and who had within twelve months from the latter date registered their names with the British Resident, should be exempt “from all compulsory military service, whatever.” There is no getting outside this provision, which implies general liability to military service while providing for certain exemptions. It was open to the British Government to do as other foreign Governments had done—to enter into a special treaty for the exemption of British subjects from military service. This precaution, however, had for some reason been neglected.

For the purposes of the expedition against Malaboch more than one hundred British subjects were called out. The great majority of them accepted the responsibility, went willingly to the front, enjoyed the outdoor life of the campaigner, and received compensation for their services. Five of the men thus “commandeered”—to use the local expression—stood on their dignity as British subjects, refused to go, were placed under arrest, and made the centre of a noisy agitation, organised by persons who, it was afterwards admitted, were possessed of no particular social or commercial standing. They succeeded, however, in contriving

so disorderly a demonstration on the occasion of the arrival at Pretoria of Sir Henry Loch, on a diplomatic mission chiefly connected with the settlement of Swazieland, that it needed all Mr. Kruger's influence with his burghers to prevent the peace being seriously broken. In this instance, as in connection with the flag incident of 1890, Mr. Kruger refused to regard the acts of a reckless few as expressive of the disposition of the many. As it was, a catastrophe was only narrowly avoided, and probably would not have been avoided at all if Sir Henry Loch had not been prevailed on to abandon his intention of visiting Johannesburg, where noisy demonstrations were being prepared in his honour. As regards the demonstrations against the Transvaal Government in Pretoria, two things are certain. First, that Sir Henry Loch was totally misled by them; next, that they did not engage the sympathy of any of the more respectable and responsible class of foreign residents. The final result of the discussion over the "commandeering" business was that the Transvaal Government willingly entered into an agreement to exempt British subjects from military service in the future.

Later in the year a new and more formidable danger threatened the South African Republic. The rapidly approaching completion of the Delagoa

Bay railway, coupled with the construction of the railway extension from Natal and the rejection of the Cape pooling proposals, suggested to Mr. Rhodes and his ministerial colleagues the desirability of rectifying the situation in their own favour by some counter-stroke of the nature of a *coup d'état*. Since 1891 the Chartered Company had been endeavouring to disturb the Portuguese in the possession of their Colonies on the eastern coast of Africa. In 1891 an attempt had been made to smuggle arms from a Cape port into Portuguese territory, with the view of prompting a native insurrection against Portuguese authority, while a secret expedition against the port of Beira only failed to come off by reason of the timidity of the agent to whom it was entrusted. Towards the end of 1894 reports were persistently set afloat of an intention on the part of the Chartered Company either to purchase, or otherwise get possession of, the Portuguese harbour and settlement at Delagoa Bay. It will be obvious that if such a project could be carried out, the trouble taken by the Transvaal Government to secure an independent access to the sea would be thrown away. Whether the Chartered Company could seize and maintain its hold upon Delagoa Bay may be doubtful. But at the very least it could hope to obtain such an advantage that it might

be able to compel the Portuguese Government to make certain concessions in its favour which would go far to neutralise the advantage sought by the Pretoria Government, and thus wreck that dream of commercial independence which lay at the root of the policy expressed in the building of the Delagoa Bay line. In what way this scheme of the Chartered Company—as it was believed to be—could be carried out was not all at once apparent. What was incumbent on the Transvaal Government was to find means to defeat it. Those means were found in the commercial interest of the German Government in the line from Delagoa Bay to Johannesburg. It may be suspected, indeed, that the German Consul-General at Pretoria was interested in the situation quite as much on behalf of the German Government as on behalf of the Government of the South African Republic. At any rate, the prompt intervention of Germany, which despatched a couple of men-of-war to Delagoa Bay, saved the situation for the Republic. The next step was the interchange of diplomatic views between England and Germany, resulting in a mutual agreement to maintain the *status quo*, so far as Portugal was concerned, at Delagoa Bay.

It cannot be complained that there was anything improper or illegitimate in this intervention by

Germany, on her own behalf and on behalf of the South African Republic, in the situation at Delagoa Bay. Instead of complaining of Germany, citizens of the British Empire should rather experience regret that the ill-considered hostility of the British Government—hostility carefully fomented by Mr. Rhodes—should have compelled the Transvaal to look to a foreign Power for protection and relief. If Great Britain had regarded its quasi-protectorate over the South African Republic as involving responsibilities as well as conferring rights, if the British Government had placed itself in such a position that the Republic could claim its assistance and protection against hostile forces, the whole circumstances would have been different. The misfortune was then, as it seems to be still, that the British Government allowed itself to be represented and to be led by a small group of speculators who had only their own interests to serve, and who, by assuming the rôle of extenders of the Empire, warded off the criticism which would otherwise have speedily exposed their real springs of action. It is, on the other hand, to be regretted that German exultation over what was no doubt a diplomatic success did not pause to consider the injury it might be doing to those—i.e., the burghers and Government of the South African Republic—whom Germany was professing to assist. There can be

no question that the spirit that prevailed on the occasion of the celebration at Pretoria of the German Emperor's birthday in January, 1895, was not calculated to promote cordiality of feeling between Pretoria and London. All that was expressed in the German programme of the proceedings, and all that was said in his speech on the occasion by Mr. Kruger, might be perfectly true. There are, however, times when it is good policy to observe some reticence, and not to say all that one thinks. If this rule had been observed in Pretoria in January, 1895—the remark applies more to German officials than to officials of the South African Republic—German intervention would not, twelve months later, have supplied Mr. Rhodes with so admirable and effective a means for throwing public opinion in England off the track of his own misdoings.

As the year 1895 advanced, it became more and more evident to those who carefully watched the situation that some *coup* was intended against the independence of the South African Republic. The language of newspapers, both in Capetown and Johannesburg, that were run in Mr. Rhodes's interest, became more menacing, while—and this was perhaps most significant of all—the *Cape Times*, which, though Imperialist, had been tolerably independent, openly proclaimed itself an advocate and

supporter of Rhodesian views. The festivities, early in July, to celebrate the opening of the Delagoa Bay railway, afforded an opportunity for the exchange of some civilities between the various South African Governments, as well as between the Executive at Pretoria and the Colonial Office; but unfortunately the occasion almost exactly coincided with such a change of Ministry in London as the adversaries of the Transvaal had been hoping for. A Tory Ministry came into power, resulting, so far as the Colonial Office was concerned, in the substitution of the impetuous versatility of Mr. Chamberlain for the courteous and experienced statesmanship of the Marquis of Ripon. The pot of conspiracy at once ceased to simmer and began to boil. The complaints from Johannesburg grew louder, while misrepresentations of Mr. Kruger and his Government became more incessant and more unscrupulous.

A pretext for creating a diplomatic crisis was soon found in the dispute between the Cape Colony and the Transvaal with regard to through railway rates. The history of this question deserves to be carefully followed. When, at the end of 1891, the Cape Government entered into a Convention with the Transvaal for the extension of the Cape railway system to Johannesburg, an agreement as to through rates was made which was to be in force

for three years. It was considered in Pretoria, and very reasonably considered, that by the end of those three years the Delagoa Bay line would be so near completion that a revision of the whole question of through rates would be necessary. That Cape Ministers meantime fed themselves with the hope that the Delagoa Bay line would never be finished there can be little doubt. Further than this, there is ground for believing that they endeavoured to prevent its completion by raising a financial prejudice against it in Europe. The essence of the arrangement between the Cape Government and the Transvaal railways was that through rates should be settled by mutual agreement between the two railway administrations. Presently the Cape Government, probably in some degree out of revenge for the rejection of its "pooling" proposals, gave notice of a reduction in the rate for certain classes of goods over its own system. The Transvaal railway company, objecting to this independent action, at once, with the consent of the Pretoria Government, raised the rates over its own section of the Johannesburg route to a level that kept the through rate exactly where it was. Some considerable indignation has been expended, by persons who have not understood the position, over this step. It could, however, hardly have been expected that the Transvaal railway adminis-

tration would sit still and see the Cape Government scheming to interfere with their legitimate business without endeavouring to protect themselves. What no doubt gave their action an awkward appearance was the fact that, owing to the small mileage under their control of the route from Cape ports to Johannesburg, they were obliged, in order to restore the through rate to its former level, to charge what seemed an abnormally high rate per ton per mile.

The campaign of rates being thus begun, the Cape Government endeavoured to defeat the move of the Transvaal railway administration by avoiding their section of the route altogether. The Cape railway system then practically extended as far as the Vaal River, the boundary between the Free State and the Transvaal. From the Vaal River to Johannesburg the railway distance was some fifty-two miles, whereas the direct distance, by road, was not much over thirty miles. The Cape Government thereupon adopted the system of unloading the railway trucks on the Free State side of the Vaal River,¹ whence goods might

¹ It was this act of the Cape Government that went a long way towards convincing the Free State Volksraad of the necessity of taking over the control of Free State railways. The Cape Government, it was complained, was making use of Free State soil to wage a commercial war with the Free State's friends and allies in the Transvaal.

be conveyed, by ox-wagon, across the river-drift, direct to Johannesburg. The Transvaal Government in its turn retaliated by giving notice to close the drifts to traffic on a certain date.

This was the whole size and significance of that "Drifts Question" which was made to assume such formidable dimensions in the eyes of British newspaper readers. Really, a more paltry squabble could not have arisen, though it is important to point out that in the Parliamentary Blue Book [C—8474] referring to the subject the real origin of the dispute is concealed as much as possible. In all probability even Lord Rosmead himself was not fully aware of the nature of the question involved. That, however, did not matter to those who were concerned in finding some way of involving the Imperial Government in a serious quarrel with the South African Republic. The eagerness with which Mr. Rhodes jumped at the opportunity thus afforded is clearly indicated by the dates of the published correspondence. The despatch from the British Agent in Pretoria, forwarding the proclamation referring to the closing of the drifts, was dated the 29th of August, and could not possibly have arrived in Capetown earlier than the afternoon of the 1st of September. Yet on the 3rd of September Mr. W. P. Schreiner, the Cape Attorney-General, had a legal opinion ready

drawn up, contending (1) that the Transvaal Executive had no power to close a port of entry that had once been opened, and (2) that the proclamation, because it distinguished between colonial goods and over-sea goods, constituted a breach of the London Convention. Mr. Schreiner, when questioned as a witness before the South African Committee in 1897, admitted that he had since entertained very grave doubts as to the correctness of the view he laid down in 1895, and probably the best thing that can be said for him is that in 1895 he was so completely under the domination of Mr. Rhodes as to believe that everything must be legal which Mr. Rhodes wished to be legal. That the law-officers of the Crown in London entertained grave doubts on the subject can be very easily gathered from the official papers; for though a copy of their opinion is not given, Mr. Chamberlain evidently relied on it so little that he rather preferred to base any action against the Transvaal on the alleged general unfriendliness of the action of the Transvaal Government.¹

The central fact of the situation, however, was not the sufficiency or insufficiency of the alleged cause for action, but the eagerness with which Mr. Rhodes and his Ministry after him jumped at the opportunity of bringing about an open breach

between Great Britain and the South African Republic. This was the climax to which everything had been leading up, and it will be clear that if a war with the Transvaal could be started on such a basis any causes alleged to lie in the grievances of foreign population might be left out of sight. Once let a war break out, and in the event of that war terminating unfavourably for the South African Republic, the London Convention and the Pretoria Convention (or as much as was left of it) would be regarded as having ceased to exist. There can be little doubt that this was the end which Mr. Rhodes had in view when he induced Mr. Schreiner to commit himself to that legal opinion, and when he persuaded his other colleagues to join him in promising to share with the Imperial Government the expenses of a war with the Transvaal, and in assuring Mr. Chamberlain that a majority in the Cape Parliament would support his proposals.¹ The excuse for Mr. Rhodes's colleagues is that they were all pre-eminently weak men, whom he was accustomed to dominate as he pleased. But that none of them felt comfortable about it seems very clearly indicated by the request made to Mr. Chamberlain that the telegram agreeing to take an equal share in the cost of an anti-Transvaal expedition might be regarded as confidential.² As regards

¹ Blue Book C—8474, No. 17.

² *Ibid.* No. 207.

Mr. Chamberlain's action, it is difficult to decide whether to be most astonished at the cheerfulness with which, when hardly more than three months in office, he was ready to light the flames of civil war throughout South Africa, or at the artfulness he showed in concealing his real frame of mind from the people of Great Britain. It was in the very first days of November, 1895, that Mr. Chamberlain was negotiating with the Cape Ministry as to the share they were willing to take in a war with the Transvaal. Yet on the 6th of November, speaking in London at a banquet given by the Agent-General for Natal—a Colony which would have been utterly and irretrievably ruined if such a war had been undertaken—Mr. Chamberlain's utterances breathed of nothing but brotherly love and arbitration.

The Transvaal Government, in reply to what was understood both in London and in Capetown to be an ultimatum, engaged to take no further steps as to the closing of the drifts without consulting the British Government. This concession could easily be made from Pretoria, seeing that, even in the very midst of its fierce preparations for war, the Cape Government had taken part in a conference, held at Pretoria, for the purpose of considering how misunderstandings could be avoided in the future. Thus the immediate opportunity for coercing the

South African Republic passed away from Mr. Rhodes's hand. Mr. Rhodes, however, had other cards to play. A week or two later—on the 20th of November, 1895—the South African world was electrified by a speech delivered by Mr. Lionel Phillips, in his capacity as Chairman of the Johannesburg Chamber of Mines—a speech which dwelt in extravagant terms on the alleged grievances of the foreign population in the Transvaal, and plainly hinted at some strong measures to be taken in order to secure redress.

The Rhodesian campaign against the 'South African Republic had now assumed another shape. The object was the same, but the machinery was different. If the independence of the Republic could not be overthrown, if the gigantic amalgamation and monopolising of the goldfields at which Mr. Rhodes was aiming could not be effected, through an open attack from without, these ends might be secured by insurrection within. It was the big capitalists, formed into a ring with Mr. Rhodes and Mr. Beit as its centres, who were now to provide the sinews of war. There were arms to be imported, provisions and horses to be provided, men to be paid. All these things meant the expenditure of money; and the freedom with which money was expended has been made a matter of public testimony and admission. The

speech of Mr. Lionel Phillips was the signal that the new game was to begin. How well and how widely the situation was understood was made manifest by the minatory article that appeared in the *Times* on the strength of Mr. Phillips's speech and by the arrival in South Africa of special artists and special correspondents sent from England to be "in at the death" of the South African Republic.

The chief agent of open agitation on the spot was, as soon as the moment for action arrived, the revived Transvaal National Union, of which Mr. Charles Leonard, the legal adviser of most of the large capitalist firms, had become President. In his capacity as President, it was Mr. Leonard's special business to draw up the famous manifesto professing to set forth the grievances complained of. That Johannesburg had grievances to complain of there can be no doubt, but these were hardly the grievances that appeared in Mr. Charles Leonard's manifesto, nor were they the result of any action or maladministration on the part of the Republican Government. Johannesburg had seriously to complain of a bad and utterly insufficient water-supply, of outrageously high rentals, of the high charges levied by professional men, of the low moral tone of the whole community, of the neglect of men who had made millions out of the place to spend a single penny for its adornment or for the public conveni-

ence. The bad and insufficient water-supply meant a great deal more than mere shortness of water. It meant typhoid fever in the summer, and, owing to the dust blown about, pneumonia in the winter. The Transvaal Government, however, was in no way responsible for these evils. The water-supply was in the hands of a monopoly consisting for the most part of Cape capitalists, who simply fed upon the necessities of the inhabitants of Johannesburg. The exorbitant rents were the result partly of heavy speculation in building sites and partly of the fact that almost all building materials, low in value but heavy in weight, had to be transported by rail or by ox-wagon at least four hundred miles from the spot where they were landed. The high charges of professional men were the result of the reckless expenditure of mining companies in the costs of litigation, while the low moral tone of the community was only what might be expected to prevail where the leading men were of mixed nationality and often dubious origin, who subordinated everything to the desire for making money. It is because of this low moral tone that, even up to this day, all parents who can afford to do so send their children to be educated elsewhere—in Natal, in the Free State; in the Cape Colony. These grievances, however, found no place in the manifesto of the National Union which was published as a justification for revolt.

And for a very good reason. The revolt was a capitalists' revolt, besides which the chairman of the National Union was a solicitor enjoying the cream of the capitalists' business.

These grievances were carefully ignored in the manifesto of the Transvaal National Union. The grievances set forth in that manifesto, however, require some notice. These included (1) the dynamite monopoly, (2) the price of coal, (3) railway rates generally, (4) direct taxation, (5) direct taxation of the mining industry, and (6) the general attitude of Mr. Kruger's Government towards that industry. As regards the dynamite question, it is impossible to discuss it apart from the fact that the agitation that arose over it in Johannesburg was really a struggle between two monopolies—Nobel's and that granted by the Transvaal Government to the dynamite company. That the former worked their monopoly mercilessly, as long as they possessed it, is beyond doubt, their price in Barberton having been £7 10s. per case. In 1894, the year upon which the Transvaal National Union based their charges against the Government, the price charged by the dynamite company was from 85s. to 87s. 6d. per case. This price must be placed in contrast with the fact that in 1890 Nobel's agent had offered to the Johannesburg Chamber of Mines to fix the price of dynamite at £5 per case for five

years or quantities of not less than one hundred cases, the offer being made as a concession to the mining industry.¹ Further than this, in 1894 Mr. Lionel Phillips, as chairman of a Committee of the Chamber of Mines, had recommended the formation of a dynamite monopoly company, in which the mining companies should be shareholders, on the understanding that the price of dynamite should be fixed at 90s. per case till a 10 per cent. dividend had been paid for three years.² Grafting, therefore, that the price of dynamite might be lower, it is absurd to suppose that that price constituted a crying grievance at the time of the drawing up of the National Union's manifesto. There is another aspect of the matter, moreover, which is worthy of a moment's attention. During his candidature for the Presidency, Mr. Kruger more than once referred to the dynamite monopoly as involving the independence of the country. It is not difficult to understand his meaning when it is remembered that the dynamite company is also a gunpowder manufacturing company, and that more than once in South African history the supply of ammunition to the Republics has been arbitrarily prohibited by the British Government. Nor does it seem, in the light of these facts, out of the way to surmise that

¹ Chamber of Mines Report for 1890, pp. 53, 54.

² Ibid. 1894, pp. 94, 95.

the campaign against the dynamite monopoly has more behind it than a mere objection to the price of dynamite.

Then there was the complaint as to the price of coal. Now coal is really the cheapest thing on the Rand. The price at the pit's mouth is about 10s. per ton, the Government charging a royalty of one per cent., or a fraction over one penny per ton, while even with railway carriage at 3d. per ton per mile the average cost at the mines is only 15s. per ton, the price which the Cape Government is content to pay for the coal in use on its railways. As regards railway rates, the history and reason of the high rates charged on the Transvaal railways between the Vaal River and Johannesburg has already been given. If, however, railway rates are regarded as a tax on the gold industry, the two Colonies—Natal and the Cape of Good Hope—were just as much to blame as the Transvaal railways, for they have pocketed, thanks to the Johannesburg trade, hundreds of thousands in excess of the sum necessary to pay interest on their borrowings for railway purposes. There is, besides, this further very important fact—that the through rates on the route between Johannesburg and Delagoa Bay have been kept at a higher level than was financially necessary, in order not to exclude the Cape Colony from the benefits of the Johan-

nesburg traffic. If the same mileage rate were charged on the Delagoa Bay route as is charged on the Cape route, the whole of the Transvaal traffic over Cape railways would be diverted to the route through Delagoa Bay.

The complaint as regards the Transvaal Customs tariff need not be very specially alluded to, because it is now pretty generally admitted that that tariff is by no means oppressive, and in fact compares favourably with the Cape Colony tariff and the tariff in force in several British possessions. If it is complained that the alien population contribute the greater part of the Customs revenue, the answer is simple, viz., that the alien population consume the greater bulk of the goods imported. The complaints with regard to taxation, either directly personal or directly bearing on the mining industry, can best be disposed of by figures. The only direct personal taxes generally levied in the South African Republic are (1) the Poll Tax, which in 1894 produced £9,950; (2) the Road Tax, producing in 1894, £11,542; and (3) the Railway Tax, producing in the same year £6,800—a total of £28,292.¹ These taxes represent something over 11s. per head per annum on the whole European population of

¹ These figures, as well as others quoted, are taken from *The Argus Annual* for 1896, published by the Argus Printing and Publishing Co., Limited, in Capetown.

Johannesburg, and possibly about 4s. 6d. per head on the entire population of the Republic, the fact having to be taken into consideration that many foreign residents never pay them at all. As regards the taxation of the mining industry, figures are again the best guide. In 1894 the nominal value of the capital invested in gold-mines in the Transvaal was about £37,500,000, the market value being very much in excess of that figure. In that year diggers' and prospectors' licences together produced £185,711, diggers' licences amounting to £43,465. Thus the amount received from both classes of licences amounted to 0.49 per cent. on the nominal capital invested, while the amount received for diggers' licences represented 0.12 per cent. on the same value. In 1894 the total output from the Rand mines was 2,024,164 oz., with a value, at 70s. per ounce, of £7,084,574. Add to this the value of some 92,000 ounces from the De Kaap mines, and we get a gold output for the year of a value of £7,406,574—a figure which cannot be very far wrong; as the gold export from Cape ports in that year was valued at £7,370,058. As only producing mines pay diggers' licences, the sole direct taxation on this amount was £43,465, equal to 0.58 per cent. on the value of the year's output. It is difficult to see how the royalty legitimately due to the Government of a gold-producing country could

be fixed any lower. In several British possessions it is very much higher. There is, for example, a 50 per cent. royalty in Rhodesia. In Canada, according to the most recent regulations, a 10 per cent. royalty is payable. In other Colonies 2 per cent. or $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. is payable, quite apart, of course, from the payments for leases or licences. In the South African Republic alone no royalty is levied on the product of the mines. And yet the world has been invited to regard the Transvaal Government as oppressive!

Proceeding to the question of the general attitude of the Pretoria Government towards the mining industry, it has already been shown that in 1890 the Chamber of Mines, as representing that industry, passed a cordial vote of thanks to the Government for what it had done. Similar evidence is to be found in the reports of the Chamber of Mines for 1894 and 1895, this evidence being in direct conflict with the statements made in the manifesto of the Transvaal National Union. Here are some instances. The manifesto complains of concessions; yet at page 141 of the Report of the Chamber of Mines for 1894 a passage appears expressing the opinion that, by virtue of the resolutions passed by the Volksraad, the "concessions period might be considered to have closed," while at page 18 of the Report of

1895 it is recorded that no applications were made for concessions in that year. It appears also that the Volksraad did all the Chamber of Mines asked in respect of Sunday working; ¹ passed the labour regulations suggested by the Chamber without alteration; ² passed a satisfactory law with regard to the sale of drink to natives; ³ took pains to prevent the molestation and robbery of natives on their way to the mines; ⁴ accepted the recommendations of the Chamber of Mines for the codification of the gold-law; ⁵ amended or rejected patents objected to by the Chamber; ⁶ acted in accordance with the views of the Chamber with regard to a proposed cyanide monopoly; ⁷ promptly appointed a commission to investigate complaints as to trading in mining areas; ⁸ and reduced a proposed royalty on coal from 2½ to 1 per cent. on receipt of a memorial from the Chamber. ⁹ The National Union's manifesto, again, included a complaint as to the salaries of the judges; but it altogether ignored the fact that the Volksraad had already, by resolution, increased these salaries by more than fifty per cent. in response to a memorial from the Chamber of Mines. ¹⁰

¹ Chamber of Mines Report, 1894, p. 123.

² Ibid. 1895, p. 140. ³ Ibid. p. 14. ⁴ Ibid. p. 15.

⁵ Ibid. p. 16. ⁶ Ibid. p. 18. ⁷ Ibid. p. 19.

⁸ Ibid. p. 20. ⁹ Ibid. p. 21. ¹⁰ Ibid. pp. 450, 151.

These references, which are at any moment capable of verification, should be enough to convince all fair-minded people that nothing could be more ridiculous and groundless than that charge of a general hostility to the mining industry which was, prior to the Jameson raid, laid against the Government presided over by Mr. Kruger. The references given relate chiefly, as will be seen, to the year 1895—the year in which, according to Mr. Lionel Phillips and Mr. Charles Leonard, the oppression and neglect of the mining industry by the Transvaal Government were so flagrant that nothing short of an armed revolt, assisted by a military invasion, could provide a remedy. The fact is that, relying on the previous efforts made to prejudice the public mind in Great Britain, the leaders of the revolutionary movement drew up their manifesto with as little regard to accuracy as they would have shown in drawing up the prospectus of a new mining company.

There are two or three questions which stand in a measure by themselves, and which deserve a few words of reference. There is, for example, the language question. That is just one of those questions which, if left alone, will settle itself in the most natural manner, but which, if made the subject of controversy, will prove a source of

endless heart-burning and irritation. On the one hand, nobody can find fault with the burghers of the Transvaal for their jealous guardianship of their own language. Such a regard for their own language has been characteristic of all peoples who cherish their political freedom. On the other hand, no one can deny the fact that English is more and more creeping into use, especially among the rising generation, even children born of Dutch parents preferring, by habit, to use English among themselves. So far as public business is concerned, no resident in the South African Republic ever had reason to complain of inconvenience by reason of the use of the Dutch language in public documents or in the public offices. In all public departments English is both understood and spoken, and even on the Transvaal railway system a courteous English-speaking station-master will be found at the most out-of-the-way stations. If it is complained that the Transvaal Government is too exacting in respect of the use of the official language, an irresistible reply is to be found in the fact that during the period of the annexation the Dutch language—the language then of some nine-tenths of the population—was habitually ignored. There is a question of sentiment involved here which will never fail to make itself felt whenever there is ground for a suspicion that an

assault is being made on the Dutch language. But, so long as there is a show made of keeping up the official language, the Transvaal Government persistently winks at the use of English whenever it becomes convenient to use it, in the courts, in official advertisements, or in any other manner. If the sentiment that hangs round this question were left undisturbed, practical difficulties would quickly disappear.

The education question has been, of course, to a large extent a question of language. What language is to be the medium of instruction? Whenever language becomes, or is allowed to become, a matter of sentiment, no surprise can be felt if the sentiment is reflected in the regulations respecting education. Transvaal burghers have been taught by circumstances to regard their language as intimately mixed up with the question of their independence. It is not necessarily so; nevertheless the belief that it is so is a belief which has always been respected by European friends of national liberty. The conduct of British Governments in South Africa has not, unfortunately, furnished a very good example in respect of this matter. As has been already stated, during the annexation period in the Transvaal the Dutch language was absolutely ignored by officials, except when they were desirous of prosecuting a Dutch

newspaper for sedition. In the Cape Colony Dutch is, and always has been, the prevailing language; indeed, there is at this day more Dutch spoken in the streets of Capetown, than in the streets of Bloemfontein, the Free State capital. Yet in the Cape Colony, even for some years after the establishment of responsible government, the Dutch language was so completely tabooed that the telegraph offices would only accept messages in English, and it was not till the year 1882, or thereabouts, that a Dutch member could use his own language in the Cape Parliament. In the face of these facts it seems somewhat hypocritical to censure the Transvaal Government for showing a regard for the national language of the country. That regard, however, is neither prohibitive nor exclusive. It is evinced solely in the regulations applying to the conferring of the Government capitation grant on schools in which other languages—of course notably the English language—are chiefly in use, and in these schools the grant can be secured if a certain number of hours per week are devoted to Dutch. As a matter of fact, the Transvaal regulations in this respect are considerably more elastic than those of the Free State Government. "And rightly," it will be said, "because there is in the Transvaal a larger percentage of the foreign element." Yes,

rightly; and the Transvaal Government has recognised the fact. As soon as that Government can feel assured that no designs are entertained against the independence of the Republic, no doubt the jealousy with which the national language is regarded will somewhat relax. Meantime, in spite of the outcry raised over this question, it cannot be said that education is in such a terribly bad way in the Transvaal. According to the Johannesburg census taken in 1896—a census whose figures do not seem to give satisfaction to those, including Mr. Bryce, who indulge in what they call “estimates” of the Johannesburg population—showed that while out of 13,391 European children under fifteen 6,992 were unable to read and write, 6,439 of these alleged illiterates had not attained their fourth birthday and were thus under “school age.” So that, after all, the real illiterates only numbered 553, or 4.13 per cent. of the total number of children.

The denial of any powers of self-government to the foreign population is another charge that has been made against Mr. Kruger's administration. Leaving the political franchise out of sight for a moment, let us see how far this is true. As a matter of fact Johannesburg, almost ever since it was founded, has been in the possession of a municipal Government under the name of

the "Sanitary Committee," the members of which were elected by the householders for two years, the chairman being elected by the members. Mr. Hancock, who occupied the chair for several years, is a British subject and an Englishman born. The Committee, until it was superseded by the new municipal body, exercised all the functions of a municipal council, and in 1894 gathered in a revenue of £132,000 raised by rates on the value—not the rental—of property.¹ There can be no doubt that the Sanitary Committee was a live body, and in 1894 and 1895 it displayed its regard for the interests of the town by fighting, not the Government, with which it has always been on the best of terms, but the Water Works Company and the capitalists at the back of it.

And what about the political franchise? The amount of nonsense talked and written—purposely talked and written, for it cannot be supposed that the talkers and writers are as ignorant as they profess to be—on this subject by the enemies of the South African Republic is astonishing. The

¹ This is one of the instances in which Mr. Kruger's administration gave the foreign population the essence of what they wanted, while giving it under a name to which the burgher population would not object. In the same way, it gave them a railway along the line of the mines under the name of a "tram." If Mr. Kruger's Government had been what it is so often represented to be, it would have acted in exactly the opposite way.

main factors in the question—viz., that the South African Republic is a foreign State, and that hardly a single alien has shown the least disposition to abandon his own nationality or to comply with the very reasonable regulations for registration with the officials of his own district—have been absolutely ignored. On the other hand, and in defiance of the real facts of the case, it has been fiercely argued that, as the English and Dutch populations have equal political rights in the Cape Colony, therefore they ought to have equal political rights in the South African Republic. All those who use this argument must be perfectly aware that it is absolutely worthless; they must be perfectly aware that the question is not one of nationality, but of international law; and it is to be feared that they use the worthless argument wilfully for the purpose of arousing in England a popular prejudice against the Transvaal Government. There are men of British birth—Messrs. Loveday and Frank Watkins—sitting in the Transvaal Legislature, no exception ever having been taken either to their presence or their action therein. They sit there because they are legally qualified through residence and naturalisation. As regards the question generally, it is impossible to go behind the reply given by Mr. Hofmeyr, the leader of the Bond party in the Cape

Colony, when, a year or two prior to the Jameson raid, he was asked by a representative of the *Westminster Gazette* whether the franchise might soon be conceded in the Transvaal. "Possibly," Mr. Hofmeyr replied, "with some five years' period for naturalisation, such as France, America, and other countries insist upon; but that naturalisation must be full. I must frankly say that I cannot see why men expect to be made voting citizens in any country without transferring their full allegiance to it. There must be no more trying to sit on two stools." This view of the matter, which it is important to remember was expressed at a time when the Bond party was supporting the Government of Mr. Rhodes, must appeal to the common sense of every one. If there were among the generality of the alien population in the Transvaal a sincere wish to acquire political rights, evidence of that desire would be forthcoming in the applications for naturalisation. Such applications, however, are few and far between, mainly because the alien population enjoy so many practical advantages that it is not worth while to become naturalised. There is no profession or business in which an alien may not freely embark; there is no kind of practical disability to which he is subject. Why, then, should foreigners, many, if not the majority, of whom contemplate resettling at some time in their

own country, trouble themselves with the processes of naturalisation?

It may, however, be argued that the process of gaining political rights has been made so difficult that there is little encouragement to seek naturalisation. No doubt, during the last five or six years the Volksraad has imposed fresh conditions, some of them of a stringent character, upon the acquiring of political privileges by aliens. But what is the cause of this policy? In 1890, when the Second Volksraad was established, it was Mr. Kruger's idea that it would serve as an education in both directions—that it would accustom the old burghers to regard without suspicion the spectacle of the newly arrived population taking part in the legislation of the country, and would accustom the new population to place more confidence in the old burghers. The concessions then made were not to be final. They were the beginnings of a reform of a kind which in no country has ever been carried out save by gradual stages. At the time they were granted these concessions gave satisfaction to nearly every one in the country. Hardly, however, had they been granted when the Transvaal Government became alive to the fact that the Republic had, in Mr. Rhodes, an enemy whose determination and whose influence, both in South Africa and in

Great Britain, rendered it necessary that the Republic should adopt a policy of the most watchful defence. Having a knowledge of what Mr. Rhodes had accomplished in Kimberley—how, through a scheme of mine-amalgamation, he had extinguished political liberty and reduced the majority of the voters to the level of mere slaves of De Beers—the Transvaal Government became alive to the possibility of the same policy prevailing in Johannesburg. To the individual alien, left free to act on his own convictions, there could be no objection. But it was only too plain that, by the adoption of a policy of mine-amalgamation—a policy which has already gone as far in Johannesburg as it had gone in Kimberley before the final triumph of De Beers—a giant and autocratic machinery would be brought into existence under which, by means of industrial and commercial pressure, every voter in Johannesburg would be made use of to advance the views and the interests of the controllers of that machinery. The spirit that might be expected to prevail was very well indicated at the time of the Jameson raid, when miners in the employ of the more powerful companies, men who had no quarrel of any kind with the Transvaal Government, were ordered to take up arms against it, with the alternative of dismissal and forfeiture of wages.

It was against this possibility, or rather probability, that the Transvaal Government and Volksraad felt themselves compelled to protect the Republic. The restrictive conditions imposed on the acquisition of the franchise by foreigners constituted a species of wire entanglement outside the fortifications. In this way the whole question of the franchise has been held in abeyance, the orderly and well-disposed many suffering, as they still suffer, for the acts of the disorderly, grasping, and aggressive few. Whenever those few are rendered harmless, whenever it is clearly understood that neither the Government nor the people of Great Britain will give support or countenance to those who, by means of wholesale deceit and bribery, defiled the reputation of this country with the stain of an international crime, then the necessity for a strictly defensive policy on the part of the South African Republic will disappear, and the obstacles in the way of the alien's path to political influence will one by one be removed.

NOTE.—No reference has been made in the above chapter to the petition from Johannesburg, said to contain 38,000 signatures, presented to the Volksraad in 1895. That petition, however, was not genuine. It was just as much a piece of bluff as the pretended possession of 25,000 rifles when really there were not much more than 2,000. That a large number of the signatures appended to it were bogus signatures can be very readily gathered from the fact that while they professed to number 38,000, the

census taken in Johannesburg in the following year showed that there were then only some 26,000 adult European males in Johannesburg, *of all nationalities*. If such a petition had been presented to the House of Commons, its promoters would probably have been brought to the bar of the House for a severe reprimand.

CHAPTER XI

KRUGER AND THE RAID

IN considering and discussing the Jameson raid there are two preliminary questions with regard to which it is desirable to have some sort of answer. These are—

1. Was Mr. Rhodes a party to the raid, as it took place?

2. What object was the raid to serve?

With regard to the first of these questions, it is plain that no statement made by Mr. Rhodes can be accorded any value, because what Mr. Rhodes absolutely denied at one time he freely admitted at another. Early in 1896 he empowered Mr. Chamberlain to declare that he (Mr. Rhodes) was entirely clear in respect both of the raid itself and of the arrangements that rendered it possible. In 1897, when before the South African Committee as a witness, he admitted to the full almost everything which he had empowered Mr. Chamberlain to deny. In both cases the denial and the admission were

deliberate, and the want of agreement between them is fatal to the acceptance of Mr. Rhodes as a witness on his own behalf.

A conclusion has to be arrived at from the consideration of facts. Here are two or three which stand apart from the admissions made by Mr. Rhodes before the South African Committee:—

1. Mr. Rhodes was in possession beforehand of the bogus letter of invitation to Dr. Jameson to come to the assistance of Johannesburg.

2. Mr. Rhodes not only declined to do anything to stop Dr. Jameson when the news of his start reached Capetown, but did his best, by promoting delays, to support him.

Both these facts are quite inconsistent with the idea that Dr. Jameson started without Mr. Rhodes's orders and against his wish. Here is something more:—

When, on first hearing of Dr. Jameson's inroad, the Transvaal Executive appealed for support to the Free State, the Acting President of that State—Mr. Blignaut—replied that he had already heard from a reliable source that the Mounted Police of the Chartered Company were merely returning to Mashonaland by "a short cut through the Transvaal." The same story was told about the same time to a high official in Capetown, as well as to a respected inhabitant of Pretoria, the informant

in this last-named case being a burgher of the Transvaal well known in Bechuanaland and Mashonaland.¹

What was, what could have been, the object of circulating this explanation simultaneously in three places several hundreds of miles apart? The object was clearly to give Dr. Jameson time—to create such uncertainty in the minds of the Transvaal Executive that delay would arise in taking steps to stop the invading force. Everything depended on Dr. Jameson getting into Johannesburg without opposition, and thus forcing the hands of the agitators there whose vacillation was seriously disturbing Mr. Rhodes's plans. Is it credible that this plausible explanation of Dr. Jameson's movements, so calculated to assist his enterprise, would have thus found its way into three places at once unless it had been suggested or sanctioned by the real organiser and director of the campaign against Transvaal independence? Those who fairly place these facts side by side with Mr. Rhodes's self-contradictions will find it very difficult to resist the conviction that, if Dr. Jameson upset Mr. Rhodes's apple-cart, it was upset by Mr. Rhodes's own instructions.

¹ The authority for the statement regarding the circulation of this story is Dr. Jorissen, who was at the time in constant consultation with the Transvaal Executive. Dr. Jorissen alludes to it in his "Transvaalsche Herinneringen."

Then what was the object of the raid? In the first place, it is evident that if it had been successful—if, that is to say, Dr. Jameson had arrived in Johannesburg without resistance or molestation—his action would have forced the hands of the “reformers” on the one hand, and would have most seriously weakened the position of the Transvaal Government on the other. Rifles have not the power of settling all questions in this world; nevertheless, there can be no doubt that the resistance so promptly and effectually opposed to Dr. Jameson’s advance gave the Transvaal Government a tremendous moral and diplomatic advantage. In the absence of resistance, or if the resistance had been less prompt and effectual, British intervention, with the approval of the whole civilised world, would have been inevitable. In this respect, Commandant Cronjé and the burghers acting under his orders saved the Republic.

And if there had been such intervention, what would have resulted? An answer to this question can be obtained by paying attention to what Mr. Chamberlain was anxious to carry through, in spite of the fact of Dr. Jameson’s prompt and total defeat. That Mr. Chamberlain has been acting throughout on the inspiration of Mr. Rhodes it seems difficult to doubt. Whatever the secret relations between them may have been, or may be,

there are obvious relations which cannot be overlooked. When, therefore, Mr. Chamberlain wrote his despatch of the 6th of February, 1896, suggesting the erection of Johannesburg and the surrounding district into a separate self-governing State, owning a sort of quasi-allegiance to the Government at Pretoria, he was acting on the suggestion of Mr. Rhodes. That Mr. Rhodes was consulted as to the terms of this despatch it seems impossible not to believe, more especially as the despatch was dated on the very day of his interview with Mr. Chamberlain. If such a change were brought into effect, Mr. Rhodes would soon have occupied in respect of Johannesburg exactly the same position which he has, since the great diamond mine amalgamation, occupied in respect of Kimberley. As De Beers diamond-mining company swallowed up all the other amalgamated groups, so the Consolidated Goldfields in Johannesburg would have swallowed up the amalgamated groups of gold-mines. Self-government for the Rand would have been established, no doubt, but it would have been self-government on the principles which are in force at Kimberley, where the great majority of the voters have to choose between obeying the orders of De Beers or being summarily dismissed from their employment, while shopkeepers and others who strive to preserve

their political independence find that their business dwindles away. Under such conditions self-government in Johannesburg would be for the benefit of the few millionaires, and entirely against the interest of the great majority of the population, who, as a matter of fact, live in deadly fear of being in some such way as this taken from under the Government of Mr. Kruger and the Volksraad and placed under the heel of Mr. Rhodes and his fellow-millionaires. Mr. Rhodes would then possess absolute control both of the diamond-mining and gold-mining industries of South Africa—a prize well worth winning even at the cost of a quarter of a million paid away in promoting an appearance of revolution.

To those who are at all acquainted with the conditions of existence at Kimberley it would be unnecessary to say all this. It is because so very few people in England are acquainted with the conditions of existence at Kimberley that in England Mr. Rhodes is so little understood, and is credited with Imperial and progressive sentiments which, though their assumption is useful enough in the game which he plays, are totally foreign to his nature. It is to keep the public mind away from the real truth that all sorts of theories and explanations of the Jameson raid have been published in magazines, the theories all differing from each

other, and all, when critically examined, seen to be equally incredible. This proposal for independent self-government in the Johannesburg district, which Mr. Chamberlain suggested after the raid, was what the raid itself, if successful, was intended to lead up to. It was no dread of German intrigue, no regard for Imperial interests, no sympathy with oppressed *witlanders*, that prompted Mr. Rhodes to action. These were merely cards in the game. If the views of the general mass of the Johannesburg population could be known it would be found that they dread Mr. Rhodes far more than they dread Mr. Kruger and his Volksraad. Care is taken, however, that their views shall not be known. Mr. Rhodes and his co-millionaires own most of the newspapers in South Africa; they can make their own suggestions to telegraphic agencies; they are wealthy enough to fly from South Africa to Europe whenever they please, and to come into social contact with public men in the United Kingdom. All having the same interest—viz., the unlimited control of wealth for their own benefit—they all naturally back each other up, even Mr. Beit himself not failing, when occasion offers, to expatiate on the virtues of Mr. Rhodes.

Knowing something, then, of the object of the raid and of the responsibility for the raid, we may go on to trace its history as seen from Pretoria.

There can be no question that the proceedings of Transvaal National Union in Johannesburg during the month of December, 1895, caused some anxiety in official circles in the Transvaal capital. Nevertheless, Mr. Kruger did not forego his usual tour through the Republic, in this instance visiting the south-eastern districts towards the borders of Swaziland, returning to Pretoria shortly before Christmas. That he was perfectly alive to the object and aim of the agitation going on in Johannesburg was indicated by the answer he gave to an anxious and inquiring burgher—that it was necessary to wait till the tortoise put its head out of its shell, when the head could be chopped off. Not even Mr. Kruger, however, anticipated the exact manner in which the crisis would arise. Official attention was rather fixed on the meeting of the National Union, which had been postponed till the 6th of January, 1896. The news of the invasion came on the Transvaal Executive with dramatic suddenness. On the 31st of December, 1895, a small number of leading residents in Pretoria waited on Mr. Kruger and the Executive Council, to urge the Government to take precautions and to seriously consider reform, adding that, in their opinion, the Johannesburg grievances “were not merely fictitious.” In the midst of this interview General Joubert came in hurriedly, stating

that he had telegrams to the effect that British troops had crossed the border at Malmani, on the Bechuanaland frontier. Incredible as the news seemed, it was soon confirmed. By that time Jameson's expedition was well on its way towards Johannesburg, and there was only time to issue the most hurried orders for the assembling of a force to resist his advance, neither Mr. Kruger nor his colleagues, fortunately for themselves, being deceived by the story sent from Bloemfontein to the effect that the Chartered Company's police were merely making a short cut back to Mashonaland over Transvaal soil. Fears were entertained that, besides the advance into the Republic from the west, an attack might be made on Pretoria from the north—fears which were shown by means of certain documents captured later to be by no means altogether devoid of foundation. It was for this reason that it was at first determined to retain the artillery, with which the Republic was by no means too well supplied, at Pretoria, and to rely on the rifles of the burghers to stop Jameson's advance.

How short the time for preparation was may be gathered from the movements of the force that went to the front, from Potchefstroom. The news of the invasion reached Potchefstroom, which lies some eighty miles south-west of Johannesburg, about

the same time that it reached Pretoria—that is, on the morning of Tuesday, the 31st of December, 1895. On the evening of that day eighty-seven men left Potchefstroom under the command of the field-cornet, the commandant of the district, Mr. P. Cronje, being already at the point chosen for the interception of the invading force. The orders given to this detachment were that they should join Commandant Cronje's force. That, however, was found to be impossible. The position taken up by the burgher levies was at a point on the road from the western frontier, a little to the west of Krugersdorp. On the south side of the road were the Krugersdorp men, under the command of Commandant Potgieter, while on the north side was another body under Commandant Malan. Commandant Cronje and his force were also on the north side of the road, but somewhat further to the west; so that the Potchefstroom contingent, in order to join Cronje, would have been obliged to cross the road, get round Malan's position, and then gone westward, bending to the left, to reach Cronje. As the enemy, however, were already in sight, there was not time to carry out this movement, the Potchefstroom men being ordered to join Potgieter's force on the south side of the road, the whole force then present numbering not more than four hundred.

The action began—reports seem positive about this—with the opening of an artillery fire from Dr. Jameson's side on the burgher positions. First Malan's position was bombarded. Then Potgieter's men came in for a share of attention. This cannonading went on till about four o'clock, and produced no damage, as the burghers, in obedience to orders, lay quiet under the shelter of the rocks and hillocks without returning a shot. It was a different thing, however, when the artillery fire ceased and the attacking force advanced in skirmishing order. Then, at a range of about five hundred yards, Malan's burghers opened fire, their example being at once followed by Potgieter's men from the south side of the road. The attack was checked, Jameson's troopers retreating with some men wounded and the loss of a good many horses. Then the Maxims were brought into play, also without much, if any, effect. The invading force next attempted to get round to the north of the burgher position. The attempt, however, was effectually defeated by Commandant Cronje. Then came a somewhat critical moment. A 12-pounder was brought forward into such a position on the south side of the road as to be able to rake the position held by Malan's men, who were on the north side, and it was then that several of the burghers' horses were killed, while a native who

was holding them had his leg taken off. To check this new attack, some 'twenty of Potgieter's men were ordered to a position a little higher up the hill overlooking the road, from whence, by a steady fire, they were able to silence the gun.

It was pretty evident that the invading force were not destined to get into Johannesburg through Krugersdorp. That conviction seemed also to be present to the minds of its commanders; for, after a brief consultation among themselves, the force suddenly formed up and began to move away to the southward. Commandant Cronje immediately prepared to follow the invaders. Taking his own men and some of Malan's, he moved away southward in a direction parallel to that taken by the enemy, leaving Potgieter's and the remaining portion of Malan's men to hold the position to the west of Krugersdorp. The night came on thick and drizzly; the men left to hold the position near Krugersdorp made themselves as comfortable as they could with their waterproofs; Cronje and his detachment kept watch upon the moving and wearied column of the invaders. During the night Cronje's son, who had been badly wounded, was taken back to the Krugersdorp hospital by his father. This was a step perhaps more natural than prudent, for during Cronje's absence some mistake had been com-

mitted, which nearly resulted in putting the invaders in a fair way to getting round the flank of the defenders' position. Cronje, however, whose real military genius decided the result of both the engagements, immediately changed his tactics. Ordering Potgieter's and Malan's men at once to move southward upon Doornkop, with the remainder of his force he followed up Jameson's men, kept them on the move during the night, and by morning, having got round their rear, had taken up a position to the south of them.

The critical moment of the conflict had arrived. The invading force, dispirited and wearied, failing to receive from Johannesburg the assistance and co-operation which they believed had been promised, seriously weakened by their losses of the previous day, and hampered through the loss of horses, saw before them their final chance of fulfilling the mission which had been imposed on them, as they thought, by the bogus letter of invitation from the Reform Committee. On the other hand, the burgher force had been continually receiving reinforcements through the night, until there were not less than two thousand men in the immediate neighbourhood, of whom, however, not more than five hundred took part in the final action. But, apart from this, Cronje's tactics had had the effect of leading the invading

column into a regular trap, out of which they could only hope to escape by storming a position which afforded admirable cover for the Transvaal sharpshooters. It was in this final action that Jameson's men charged. They formed up, the bugle sounded, and away they went up the hill as hard as they could. They were within four hundred yards of the burghers' position—within three hundred yards—two hundred yards. Now only one hundred yards separated them from the summit of the slope. Then from in front and on each side the fire of the defenders broke forth. Some thirty men were seen to fall. Nevertheless, in spite of this repulse, they retired, formed again, and again came forward. It was in vain. The second charge was as completely repulsed as the first, and the whole invading force drew off to the farm, owned by one Brink, in the rear of their position. Then a new factor came upon the scene. The expectation of an attack upon Pretoria having proved to be unfounded, the artillery had been hurried up to take part in the action. A 12-pounder and a Maxim opened fire on the farm. A faint flutter of white became visible, too indistinct at first to be readily recognised as a signal of surrender. In a few moments other white flags were displayed. Firing ceased upon both sides. A rapid interchange of communications,

followed, and in a brief space, surrounded and guarded by a strong burgher force, Dr. Jameson, his officers, and his men were prisoners in the hands of the Transvaal Government.

Meantime the state of affairs in Johannesburg represented a mixture of domestic tragedy and revolutionary farce. There were but few among the revolutionists, apparently, who gave a thought to the misery and danger they were bringing upon the families of orderly and quiet residents. There was not a man of them, on the other hand, who had the smallest intention of risking his own life in a conflict with the Transvaal burghers. The whole business of revolution was merely a farcical performance for the benefit of a British gallery. The object was not to create, but to represent, a state of revolution. It was laid down as a condition from the first that as soon as any chance or sign of a conflict arose, the High Commissioner—referred to in the revolutionists' telegrams as "Chairman"—was to hurry up from Capetown and intervene to prevent bloodshed. For remuneration at the rate of fifteen to twenty shillings a day any number of men could be found willing to march about with rifles and play the rôle of members of a revolutionary army.¹ It

¹ Quite lately, in a letter from the *Daily News* correspondent in Johannesburg, a characteristic story has been told. A miner was asked why he was marching about with a rifle. "D—d if I know," he replied; "but I am paid a pound a day to do it!"

was quite a different matter for the women and children who hurried out of the country to escape from the impending conflict. The miseries and perils endured by these unfortunate victims of the conspirators of the Rand Club are indescribable. Homes abandoned; lives sacrificed; children lost; constitutions undermined through exposure and worry—these were the favours to which the luxurious promoters of a burlesque revolution treated the women and children whom they theatrically professed to protect. Pity was afterwards showered upon the reformers for the conditions of their imprisonment at Pretoria. It may possibly have occurred to some of them that the inconveniences they suffered represented only the proper penalty for the miseries they had inflicted on the women and children—British women and children for the most part—of Johannesburg.

The Johannesburg Reformers being in this theatrical state of mind, the news of Jameson's approach struck them with a sense of consternation. If the cable could have had a faint justification for conveying to England the news that there was fighting in the streets of Johannesburg, or if two or three valiant swash-bucklers could have come in conflict with a Transvaal policeman and provoked him to use his revolver, it would have been well enough. A single pistol-shot could have easily been magni-

fied, through the cable, into a reign of terror. As it happened, however, the Transvaal Government had withdrawn the police, with the express object of avoiding any incident of this kind. Jameson's advance seemed like the grim intrusion of tragedy into the realm of farce. It might mean actual bloodshed; it might mean the risking of necks. Hence, on the morning of Tuesday, the 31st of December, 1895, while the Transvaal burghers were hastening from their homes to repel the invader, the Reform Committee, the organisers of the sham revolution, made haste to publish what one of their sympathisers has called "a solemn declaration." The Secretary of the Committee, acting "by order," stated for the information of the public, with regard to the report that a large force had crossed the border into Transvaal territory, that this had taken place "without the knowledge of the Committee," while the Johannesburg *Star*, speaking on their behalf, disavowed "any knowledge of or sympathy with the entry into the Republic of an armed force from the Bechuanaland side," and denied having been "in any way privy to the step." It may seem to require a little ingenuity to reconcile this statement with the letter addressed to Dr. Jameson, but no doubt ingenuity can be found equal to the task. The truth seems to be that the whole air was saturated with deception. Mr. Rhodes was

deceiving his colleagues; the Imperial Secretary was deceiving the High Commissioner; the Reform Committee were deceiving their adherents, as well as seeking to deceive the Pretoria Government. The whole business, in short, breathed of the morals of the "Kaffir Circus" in the Stock Exchange, where ingenuity in drawing up a prospectus runs a race with the law of frauds.

Responsible officials, both in Capetown and Pretoria, were meanwhile considering how best to quench the flames which had been kindled. The High Commissioner, Lord Rosmead, had been placed in an almost intolerable position. His trusted assistant, the Imperial Secretary, had knowingly deceived him; his Premier refused all assistance in checking the mischief, which had been set afoot. Had it not been for the assistance rendered by Mr. Hofmeyr—assistance strongly resented by Mr. Rhodes—Lord Rosmead, there seems little doubt, would have been completely paralysed. His proclamation and his orders having been contemptuously disobeyed by Dr. Jameson, and Jameson's force having been conducted onwards to its fate, there was one thing yet that the High Commissioner could do. Knowing the respect in which he was held by Mr. Kruger, and relying on the authority attaching to his position, he could offer to go up to Pretoria and endeavour to intervene in the cause

of peace and in the interest of those whose illegal adventure, as Lord Rosmead knew before he started, had placed their lives in jeopardy. There are two points to be borne in mind with regard to Lord Rosmead's intervention. In the first place, his intervention was not sought for by the Transvaal Government. In the next place, it was not offered in response to any invitations from the Johannesburg Reform Committee. There were such invitations, no doubt, but Lord Rosmead was in no practical way influenced by them. His intervention was offered from a sense of his own responsibility as the highest representative of the British Government in South Africa and from a sincere and humane desire to avert bloodshed. His offer of intervention had been made and accepted before Jameson's surrender. When the news of that surrender came, when it was seen that the lives of Jameson, of his officers and of his men, were at the mercy of the Transvaal Government, and when it was seen, too, that the futile attempt at insurrection in Johannesburg had placed the residents of that town in a most critical position, then the desirability for Lord Rosmead's presence in Pretoria became obviously stronger. The offer was made, was accepted in a cordial and friendly spirit, and on Thursday, the 2nd of January, 1896, Lord Rosmead started.

The Johannesburg reformers were stewing in their own juice, endeavouring on the one hand to prevent the men whom they had armed from committing any folly in the shape of acts of violence, and endeavouring on the other hand to bluff, with the assistance of the High Commissioner, the Pretoria Government. That Government, while the High Commissioner was approaching Pretoria, was endeavouring to arrive at a decision with regard to the way of dealing with Dr. Jameson and his men. Mr. Kruger had made up his own mind on the subject, and his resolve to hand the prisoners over to the British Government was approved by those whom he had taken into his confidence. According to Dr. Jofissen,¹ the decision was arrived at on Saturday, the 4th of January, about the time the High Commissioner arrived from Capetown. It was considered desirable, however, to keep this decision secret for a time, for two reasons—first, because the Government did not want to seem to buy off Johannesburg; next, because the burghers generally had to be consulted. The first interview between the High Commissioner, who was seriously suffering in health, and the Transvaal Executive took place on Monday, the 6th of January. Lord Rosmead, while warmly expressing his disapproval of the raid, was desirous of bringing forward the

¹Transvaalsche Herinneringen

question of reforms. Here, however, he was stopped by Mr. Kruger, who declared that nothing else could then be discussed beyond the measures to be taken to prevent further bloodshed. Johannesburg, said Mr. Kruger, must surrender its arms. The following little conversation is recorded by Dr. Jorissen, who was present :—

THE HIGH COMMISSIONER : " Yes ; but on what conditions ? "

MR. KRUGER : " Unconditionally. "

THE HIGH COMMISSIONER : " Then I am afraid they will refuse to surrender them. "

MR. KRUGER : " Then I shall go and fetch them. " Lord Rosmead did his best to induce Mr. Kruger to adopt some other view, but failed. Johannesburg, said Mr. Kruger, was to surrender its arms unconditionally within twenty-four hours.

It was the communication of this decision to the Reform Committee that at last swept the scales from their eyes, and showed them exactly where they stood. Up to the moment of the communication of this decision they had been indulging the belief that they were masters of the situation, and that, with the aid of the High Commissioner, they were dictating terms to the Transvaal Government. It was humiliating to discover that the case was exactly the opposite of this, and that the Transvaal

Government, in spite of the High Commissioner, was dictating terms to them. It was subsequently represented that the argument that weighed most with the Reform Committee in accepting these conditions was the desire to save the lives of Dr. Jameson and his men. It is no doubt natural and excusable to attribute to feelings of humanity action which was really the outcome of a sense of failure and helplessness. The Reform leaders knew very well, though others did not know, that they were totally unable to arm the majority of the men who had been paid to enrol themselves, and they knew perfectly well, moreover, that if they provoked a conflict they could not have the faintest chance of defeating the burgher forces, which were gathered in the vicinity of Johannesburg. That the Transvaal Government was in earnest they assured themselves when it came to their knowledge that the management of the Transvaal railways had instructions to have trains in readiness to remove all who wished to leave, giving preference to women and children. It would be no shame to the bravest men to surrender under such conditions. It was indeed time that the revolutionists, who had been for some weeks living in an atmosphere of theatrical illusion, should bring themselves down to the solid ground of common sense. The arms were surrendered; the worst was over; and Johannesburg

"lost no time in getting back to the groove of every-day life." On Wednesday, the 8th of January, most of the disarmed brigades paraded, were paid for their services for the previous week at the rate of from 15s. to 20s. a day, and were dismissed "with the injunction that the individual members would resume their normal avocations during the day."¹ Thus the curtain was rung down upon the revolution.

Although Mr. Kruger by his firmness had secured the disarming of Johannesburg, he had yet to face the difficulties raised by the momentary unpopularity of his action with his own burghers. The military commandants, representing the men who had risked their lives in the field in withstanding the criminal attack upon the independence of their country, had yet to be informed of the decision arrived at with regard to the prisoners. In making his communication on this subject, Mr. Kruger vigorously defended the course he was taking, which he said had been determined on for political reasons only. If the prisoners were tried in the South African Republic, they would, he declared, be inevitably sentenced to death, "and," he added, "I could not pardon them." They had, he continued, to look to the future. There were many thousands of Englishmen in the country, and if a death sentence were carried out an

¹ "The Story of an African Crisis," by F. E. Garrett, p. 224."

irreparable breach would be created. If, on the other hand, Dr. Jameson and his men were handed over, Great Britain would be placed under the necessity of dealing with them, and universal sympathy would be on the side of the Transvaal.

It is no discredit to the assembled commandants that, on its first exposition, they warmly protested against this view. For four hours, so strong was the dissent, Mr. Kruger argued with them, and at the end of the four hours they were still unconvinced. The delegates from the Free State, Messrs. Klynveld and Fischer, who were present on the occasion, asked permission to express their views, and in impressive language added their weight to Mr. Kruger's argument. At last the force of reason and considerations of humanity began to make themselves felt, and it was ultimately decided to leave the matter in the hands of Mr. Kruger and Dr. Jorissen. This proposal, it may be noted, was made by Mr. Schalk Burger, then a member of the Executive, who admitted that he was himself by no means convinced. The decision was communicated to the High Commissioner, who warmly approved and appreciated it. It is singular that the only people who found fault with the High Commissioner for accepting this decision were certain writers for the English Press, who, in various magazine and newspaper

articles, seemed to express the conviction that if Dr. Jameson had been shot a better ground of quarrel between Great Britain and the South African Republic would have been established.

The policy of "bluff" adopted by the Reform leaders now began to recoil upon themselves. With the view of alarming the Pretoria Government they had represented themselves as in possession of 25,000 rifles, and Maxims by the half-dozen. The Government, as a consequence, insisted on the production of all these arms, and as they were not forthcoming, for some time declined to consider that the terms which the Reformers had accepted were being carried out. In fact, the Reformers were very much in the same position as company promoters who, having issued a flaming prospectus, find that the public are looking for the fulfilment of the promises held out. It was the suspicion that they were being played with, as well as the discovery of the origin and the ramifications of the conspiracy, that compelled the Pretoria Government, in order to satisfy its own supporters, to issue the proclamation of the 9th of January, in which amnesty was offered to all who had taken part in the Johannesburg demonstration, "with the exception of all persons or bodies that may appear to be principal criminals, leaders, instigators, or perpetrators of the trouble at Johannesburg and suburbs." Such

persons, it was declared, would have to "justify themselves before the legal and competent courts" of the Republic. This proclamation was followed up by the arrest and conveyance to Pretoria of the members of the Reform Committee, sixty-four in number. That they did not find their detention at the Pretoria gaol in every sense comfortable, may be admitted; but no doubt they became philosophical under the reflection that those who play at bowls must expect to get rubs. They had recklessly played for a big stake and lost, and, after all, the ultimate penalty was not a very heavy one.

Following the example he had set himself on previous occasions, Mr. Kruger sought to make it clear that he distinguished between the few and the many—the few who had intrigued against the Republic; the many who had been misled and deceived. It was for this purpose that he issued the famous proclamation of the 10th of January, 1896, addressed, by authority of the Executive, "to all residents in Johannesburg." After expressing thankfulness that the "despicable and treacherous" incursion into the Republic had been prevented, and the independence of the Republic saved, through the courage and bravery of the burghers, the proclamation proceeded as follows:—

"The persons who have been guilty of this crime must naturally be punished according to law, that is to say, they must

stand their trial before the High Court and a jury, but there are thousands who have been misled and deceived, and it has clearly appeared to me that even among the so-called leaders of the movement there are many who have been deceived.

"A small number of intriguers in and outside the country ingeniously incited a number of the residents in Johannesburg and surroundings to struggle, under the guise of standing up for political rights, and day by day, as it were, urged them on, and when in their stupidity they thought the moment had arrived, they (the intriguers) caused one Dr. Jameson to cross the boundary of the Republic.

"Did they ever ask themselves to what they were exposing you?

"I shudder when I think what bloodshed could have resulted had a merciful Providence not saved you and my burghers. I will not refer to the financial damage.

"Now I approach you with full confidence; work together with the Government of this Republic and strengthen their hands to make this country a land wherein people of all nationalities may reside in common brotherhood.

"For months and months I have planned which changes and reforms could have been considered desirable in the Government and the State, but the loathsome agitation, especially of the Press, has restrained me.

"The same men who have publicly come forward as leaders have demanded reforms from me, and in a tone and a manner which they would not have ventured to have done in their own country, owing to the fear of the criminal law. For that cause it was made impossible for me and my burghers, the founders of the Republic, to take their preposterous proposals into consideration."

After alluding to the intention of the Government to introduce into the "Volksraad" a Draft Law to provide a municipality for Johannesburg, the proclamation concluded thus:—

"I earnestly request you, laying your hands on your hearts, to answer me this question: After what has happened, can, and

may I submit this to the representatives of the people? My reply is, I know there are thousands in Johannesburg and the suburbs to whom I can entrust such elective powers. Inhabitants of Johannesburg, render it possible for the Government to go before the Volksraad with the motto—forgotten and forgiven.”

Was this proclamation in accordance with the facts of the case? Was it sincere? To the first question an affirmative answer must be returned. The movement in Johannesburg did not originate with the people as a body. It was imposed upon the people by an exceedingly limited ring of intriguers, who had their own ends to serve, and who provided unlimited funds for creating the appearance of a discontent which did not really exist. The miners, who were compelled to take up arms on pain of dismissal and forfeiture of wages; the men of all sorts, who were paid from 15s. to 20s. per day to parade the streets—these instances furnish abundant proof of the real nature of the movement. There can be no doubt, either, that Mr. Kruger was perfectly correct in asserting that even among the “so-called leaders” of the movement there were many who had been deceived. Not a few of those whose names appeared on the Reform Committee had been literally bounced into that position against their will, and by threats of the unpopularity and ostracism they would have to endure when the revolution had gone through.

But was the proclamation sincere? Did it really express the mind of Mr. Kruger and his Executive? On this point also, there can be no doubt. Mr. Kruger felt all that he expressed and meant all that he said. Why, then, some weeks after the issue of this proclamation, did he seem to recede from the position he had taken up, and to be once more disposed to view the Johannesburg population with suspicion?

The explanation of this apparent change of attitude is to be found in the archives of the Colonial Office. Up to the end of January, 1896, Mr. Chamberlain had received nothing but praise from all parties and classes in Great Britain. He had been praised for the promptitude of his action at the moment of the raid; he had been praised for his patriotism in replying to the unfortunate telegram of the German Emperor—a telegram which was of the utmost service to the adversaries of the Transvaal, and of the utmost disservice to the Transvaal Government—by organising a flying squadron. That the praise in the first instance was more deserved than in the second may very well be contended; nevertheless, even those who sympathised most strongly with the South African Republic felt bound to resent to a certain degree what seemed like the gratuitous intrusion of a foreign interest. It may be that, like a speculator

who has made one or two lucky hits, Mr. Chamberlain was spoiled by the praise bestowed upon him. But, whatever the cause, in an evil moment he took upon himself to compose his despatch of the 6th of February, 1896, in which he suggested the practical severance of the Johannesburg district from the South African Republic. In fact, the raid and the conspiracy of which it was part having miserably and deservedly failed, Mr. Chamberlain hastened to suggest the propriety of such changes as the raid and the conspiracy, if successful, were intended to bring about. Whether this despatch was written at the suggestion of Mr. Rhodes, whether it was submitted to him before being sent off, are questions with regard to which there is no kind of certainty; but it is, to say the least, significant that it was dated on the very day of the interview between Mr. Rhodes and Mr. Chamberlain, before the former disappeared once more into the South African twilight. It is further noticeable that, in writing this despatch, Mr. Chamberlain was acting against the advice of Lord Rosmead, the most experienced High Commissioner who had ever represented the British Government in South Africa. Lord Rosmead knew well that no moment could be more inopportune for the presentation to the Transvaal Government of a demand for "reforms," and had expressed this view to Mr.

Chamberlain. After the repulse of a criminal attack on the independence of the Transvaal, and after the unexampled magnanimity with which those who made the attack had been treated, to press for important surrenders by the Transvaal Government, even if the allegations against that Government had been true, was, to say the least, indecent. Not content, however, with one blunder, Mr. Chamberlain committed another. He communicated the proposals of the despatch to telegraphic agencies before the despatch itself had been seen by the Transvaal Government. The result was what might have been expected. Deep indignation was excited in Pretoria; suspicion began once more to assert itself; while even the *nittlanders* in Johannesburg protested strongly against proposals which, owing to the way in which they were made, tended to injure their own position and which, if carried out, would have handed over their interests bodily to the tender mercies of the capitalist ring. It was little use withdrawing the despatch, as Mr. Chamberlain practically did, when he became aware of the reception it had met with. The mischief was done. The generous feelings that had sprung up between Pretoria and Johannesburg after the raid were checked and discouraged. Mr. Kruger had arduously rolled the stone of conciliation up the hill. Mr. Chamberlain wantonly rolled it down again.

The situation became more tangled; cross-purposes were at work. There was a disposition on many sides to turn away from the main facts of the problem and seek instead to fish some special advantage out of the troubled waters. Mr. Chamberlain was desirous of appearing before the nation as the smart man of action in the Cabinet; the Cape Government wished to gather in some commercial or fiscal advantage. Hence came about a misunderstanding that for a time caused some irritation. Anxious that Mr. Kruger should visit England, the Cape Ministry, which had been reconstituted after the retirement of Mr. Rhodes, suggested that Mr. Kruger should be invited to London. The Cape Ministry with an officiousness that was hardly to their credit, further suggested that the Chief Justice of the Transvaal, Mr. Kotzé, should be invited to accompany Mr. Kruger, and also assumed the responsibility of asserting that, if an invitation was sent to Mr. Kruger, he would at once accept it. The invitation was sent, but, to Mr. Chamberlain's great chagrin, was not accepted. Mr. Kruger had, as a matter of fact, never expressed any views on the subject, and, apart from anything else, was convinced that his services were very much more needed in Pretoria. Feeling was still inclined to run high on very small provocation, and it might at any moment need Mr. Kruger's tact.

and firmness to put a stop to undesirable political antagonisms. In spite of his dislike for European capitals, Mr. Kruger would, no doubt, have proceeded to England if he had deemed it desirable or necessary. It seemed to him, however, that such a visit was neither necessary nor desirable. "The British Government," he is known to have said about this time, "only invite me when they want something from me." He was genuinely afraid of being betrayed, while in London, into concessions which, on mature reflection, would be satisfactory neither to the Volksraad nor to himself. There was, moreover, another and a formidable obstacle to be got over. The President of the South African Republic cannot leave the country without the consent of the Volksraad, and the Volksraad, in its jealous care of the interests of the country, would not readily assent to the President's departure unless an understanding were first arrived at as to the subjects to be discussed with the British Government. It was on this point that the proposal finally fell through; and, though, owing to Mr. Chamberlain's having been misled in the first instance, this caused some annoyance in Downing Street, the fault was not Mr. Kruger's.

The next incident in this eventful history was the trial of the members of the "Reform Committee," which opened at Pretoria on the 24th of April, 1896.

before Mr. Justice Gregorowski. So much misrepresentation has arisen over Mr. Gregorowski's appearance on the bench that a few words of explanation seem to be needed. The senior members of the Transvaal bench—the Chief Justice, Mr. Justice Jorissen, and Mr. Justice Ameshoff—had taken a considerable part in the deliberations of the Executive in the earlier stages of the crisis. It would, then, have been open to objection if any of them had been appointed to try the political prisoners, while it might have seemed equally objectionable to leave such a grave matter in the hands of the junior judges. Mr. Gregorowski, an English barrister who passed his examinations with some degree of distinction, had for some time held the office of a judge in the Free State, but had more recently retired from the bench and undertaken the duties of State Attorney. As a gentleman and a man of learning and culture Mr. Gregorowski has always received recognition in South Africa, and to represent him, as he has been represented, as a sort of Boer Judge Jeffreys thirsting for the blood of the *uitlander*, would be utterly ridiculous if it were not so flagrantly mischievous. Mr. Gregorowski's position was this: He had before him a number of aliens, who all pleaded guilty, in a greater or less degree, to being concerned in a plot against the Government and probably the independence of the

Republic, in the attempted carrying out of which a force of irresponsible marauders—for in a legal sense Jameson's men were nothing else—had been brought into the country, and which might have led to the most appalling loss of life. It would be difficult to imagine a more serious political offence, while the deliberation with which it had been planned was brought into strong relief by the production and publication of the cipher telegram. Sitting as judge in such a case, Mr. Gregorowski had simply to act on his own impressions of the situation, and to inflict sentences in accordance with those impressions.¹ It was not for him to take into consideration what the Transvaal Executive might wish or the South African world might think. The legal aspect of the case was all that concerned him. If his sentences were afterwards modified by the Executive, that was their business and not his. As for the pecuniary fines, it was pretty plain to every one that it would have been absurd to fix them at any but a high figure. People who can spend a quarter of a million to promote a revolution have

¹ A sensational story was circulated at the time to the effect that the act of the defendants in pleading guilty was the outcome of a private understanding between the prosecution and the defence. This story has, however, been flatly contradicted by the defendants' leading counsel, Mr. Wessels. (See Mrs. John Hays Hammond's book, "A Woman's Part in a Revolution," p. 130.)

no reason to complain if, when the revolution has failed, they have to pay fifty or one hundred thousand more to free their agents from confinement. As for the capital sentences, no one possessed of even a limited knowledge of the country ever for a moment imagined that they would be carried into effect. Nevertheless it is necessary to place on record the fact that the delay in commuting the sentences arose from the opposition set up by certain members of the Executive, who wish to be thought progressive, against the humane convictions and recommendations of Mr. Kruger. It was even urged by these objectors to leniency that in 1896 four British subjects should be executed as a revenge for the execution of five Dutchmen at Slaagter's Nek in 1812. "Do you approve of Slaagter's Nek?" said Mr. Kruger. "Then why do you ask me to imitate it?"

With the conclusion of the trials at Pretoria, the history of the raid, so far as merely the South African Republic was concerned, came to an end. The political prisoners felt it no shame to call personally at the Presidency for the purpose of thanking Mr. Kruger for his leniency; mutual confidence between Pretoria and Johannesburg began to revive; while a little later the impartial trial of Dr. Jameson and his chief lieutenants before an English court acted as another tranquillising

influence. The centre of interest was thereafter removed to London, and the situation as existing at the moment of Mr. Kruger's election to a fourth term of office was principally moulded by events that passed and action that was resolved upon in the classic area lying within half a mile of the clock-tower at Westminster.

CHAPTER XII

KRÜGER RE-ELECTED

THE election of Mr. Kruger, by an overwhelming majority, to a fourth term of office, has naturally produced a profound impression in South Africa, in Great Britain, in the world at large. The impression has been all the deeper by reason of the statements so persistently put forward to the effect that his popularity was declining, and that a "forward" party among Transvaal burghers had so largely increased in numbers that Mr. Kruger, if not actually defeated, would be returned by a majority merely nominal. So far from this being the case, Mr. Kruger, out of a larger number of votes than had ever before been recorded, has secured an unprecedentedly overwhelming majority.

In this electioneering contest, Mr. Kruger's most formidable antagonist has been Mr. Schalk Burger, a comparatively young man, but possessed of considerable ability, who has not very long come into

public notice as a member of the Executive Council. More impressionable than reflective, Mr. Schalk Burger was without much difficulty led to believe that he was destined to become the agent of reconciliation between the new and the old populations of the Republic. Flattered by the attentions he received from one or two of the leading Johannesburg capitalists, he readily adopted their views, without stopping to inquire how far those views might be the result of considerations of self-interest, and without pausing to ascertain how far they might involve principles unacceptable to the great mass of voters. Openly, he had many things in his favour. Newspapers, the property of capitalists, which had previously supported Mr. Kruger, deserted from their old flag and sang the praises of Mr. Schalk Burger. In nearly every part of South Africa he had the goodwill of the majority, who had been led to believe that he was the recognised leader of a "progressive Boer party," constituting a majority in the Republic. The result proved that these impressions were entirely without justification. Mr. Kruger received some four votes to Mr. Schalk Burger's one, thus securing a stronger position than he had ever previously possessed, and revealing to the world that if there was such a thing as a progressive party in the Transvaal, it was either impotent as to numbers or regarded

Mr. Kruger's re-election as conveying the best chance of its principles becoming realised.

To those intimately acquainted with Mr. Kruger's character and the ruling principles of the burgher population, this result has caused no surprise. Whatever may be the failings or weaknesses of the character of the Transvaal burgher, in one respect he is unfailingly strong—viz., in respect of the value he places on his political independence. It is because Mr. Kruger has stood forward as the jealous guardian of that independence, and because at the time of the recent presidential election the independence of the Republic was being visibly threatened, that Mr. Kruger obtained so large a majority. In 1893, when the previous election took place, threats from outside had dwindled away almost to nothing. As a consequence, local controversies very largely governed the election, Mr. Kruger being returned by only a narrow majority over General Joubert. The Jameson raid, with its serious peril to the independence of the Republic, was in itself sufficient to render certain the re-election of the President who had grappled with and crushed it. The raid and its defeat left the way open for the restoration of complete cordiality between the British Government and the Transvaal, if only there had been at the Colonial Office in London a statesman capable of availing himself

of the opportunity — capable of discarding the influences that contrived the raid, and capable of emphasising those possibilities of agreement which have always existed in the relations between Pretoria and Westminster. Unfortunately for South Africa, and perhaps still more unfortunately for Great Britain, there was no such statesman at the Colonial Office. On the contrary, South African affairs were under the control of a politician who had in some way inextricably mixed himself up with the schemes of the bitter and avowed enemies of the South African Republic; who was bent on playing up, in his own interest, to the extremist faction of the Imperialists; and who was inspired with the notion that an overbearing and mannerless dictation is the best weapon to be found in the diplomatic armoury. As has been said, the Jameson raid made Mr. Kruger's re-election certain; Mr. Chamberlain and his despatches secured for Mr. Kruger an overwhelming and unexampled majority.

The trial and conviction of Dr. Jameson and his officers had, there can be no doubt, a satisfactory effect upon the relations between London and Pretoria. It was seen that the British Government was resolved to be true to its word, and that Great Britain was a country in which law and justice could not be turned aside from their proper course to serve

individual interests. Whatever confidence, however, was established by the trial at bar, was more than swept away by the incidents connected with the Parliamentary inquiry. Members of that Committee have claimed credit for themselves for having, in spite of the difficulties continually placed in their way, arrived at a report at all. Some credit is doubtless due to the Committee on this ground, though it may be suggested that the difficulties would have proved insuperable had it not been for a secret resolve on the part of Mr. Chamberlain to throw the report overboard at the earliest possible opportunity. Why, those difficulties should have been placed in the way of the Committee, what was the nature of those difficulties—these are matters apparently as unfathomable as the mysteries of the Dreyfus case. Some occult influence paralysed the hands and sealed the lips of almost every member, and particularly of those members who were occupying in the House of Commons places on the front Opposition bench. What was the mystery? Who was to be saved or protected? If it was only Mr. Chamberlain, one could understand the action of the supporters of the Government in assisting to shield him; but it is difficult, if not impossible, on this ground, to account for the action of the official representatives of the Liberal party in lending their aid to the same end.

Was it a Royalty that had to be screened? Was it a foreign Sovereign who had to be placated? Had the designs of Mr. Rhodes been participated in by exalted personages in Great Britain? Was the German Emperor's message to Pretoria in retaliation for a deception practised upon him, on the authority of a Secretary of State, in the name and by the hand of the British Sovereign? Who shall reply to these questions? The world can only go upon the facts that come beneath its cognisance. These facts, however, are sufficiently plain and sufficiently significant.

The first fact that is plain and patent is that the Committee unconstitutionally allowed itself to be intimidated by the Crown. Practically this was the case, even though, in a technical sense, the assertion may be contradicted. To what extent the Heir Apparent can be regarded as representing the Crown depends altogether on circumstances. Under some conditions—as when, for instance, the Heir Apparent is a child—it would be impossible to predicate the existence of any such representation. When, however, the Heir Apparent is, in the natural course of things, anticipating a not distant succession, and when he is already discharging all those social functions which properly belong to the Crown, the case is altogether different. These social functions in themselves have immense

influence with those, and the families of those, who occupy the position of political leaders, while no political leader would willingly establish relations of personal hostility between the coming Sovereign and himself. It is in this light that one has to regard the marked intervention of the Heir Apparent on behalf of the chief instigator, as he himself admitted, of the crime for which his agents were prosecuted and imprisoned. Every public and private consideration, and above all, the fact that common report was busy associating his name with that of Mr. Rhodes, should have kept the Heir Apparent away from that Committee Room. Instead of this, the world was treated to the astonishing spectacle of the Heir Apparent ostentatiously and publicly shaking hands with a British subject who had cynically admitted himself to be the principal mover in the commission of a grave international offence.

The Committee, thus intimidated, thus having been plainly informed that Mr. Rhodes was under Royal protection, readily acted up to the position imposed upon them. They allowed Mr. Rhodes to turn the Committee into a laughing-stock. They allowed him unlimited license for ridiculous misstatement. They invited him by leading questions to calumniate the Transvaal Government. They thanked him for his gracious attendance with a

humily worthy of the attitude of subjects towards an Emperor. It was a different matter when the Committee came to deal with those who had been Mr. Rhodes's dupes and agents, such as Sir Graham Bower, the Imperial Secretary. These might be torn in pieces at pleasure, scape-goats for their employer. The Committee, in fact, so far from being a Committee of Inquiry into the acts of British subjects, was converted into a Committee for bringing charges against the Transvaal Government. The members of the Johannesburg Reform Committee had full liberty to abuse and vilify the President whose tact and magnanimity had saved South Africa from the misery of a war of races. The light in which such action on the part of the Committee was regarded abroad is well illustrated in the pages of an essay published by a French journalist, M. Edgar Roëls, who had visited the Transvaal on a special mission from *Le Temps*. "It would be difficult," he said, "to find an understanding better contrived to clear the guilty and conceal complicities than in that Committee formed of English members of Parliament and statesmen, where the accused became the accusers of the country which they had violated." On the other hand, when the Committee had before it the one

"Auteur des Mines D'Or du Transvaal," Par Edgar Roëls.
1897.

independent witness who appeared—Mr. Schreiner—no effort was spared, in the shape of cross-examination, and browbeating, to twist his testimony round against the Government of the South African Republic. The scandal of the refusal to compel, or even to ask for, the production of certain telegrams, need not be enlarged upon. The climax of scandal was reached when, in the debate on the report which the Committee had painfully brought forth, the Secretary of State for the Colonies completely threw overboard the report which he had himself signed, by declaring that the honour of Mr. Rhodes was in no way touched by any of his conspiracies and deceptions, and when a noisy gang of Mr. Chamberlain's admirers, apparently primed up beforehand, turned the House of Commons into a bear-garden in order to stifle the protests that were ready to issue from even the supporters of the Government.

These proceedings, it is satisfactory to know, have not had the approval of the nation at large. On the contrary, they have been noted with deep disgust by the sober and honest adherents of both the leading political parties, and, but for the blind worship accorded to the deity of party discipline, would have aroused indignant protest. Two results, however, have followed. First, the moral prestige of Great Britain has suffered most seriously in the

estification of foreign nations. Next, the official leaders of the Liberal party have lost the confidence of the rank and file. There is, moreover, a third result of a very serious kind, and a result which may yet develop further results of a disastrous character. The determination of the British Government, as chiefly represented by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, to identify itself with the acts and aims of the avowed and unscrupulous enemies of the South African Republic has created in that country a feeling of resentment and distrust which will never be got rid of so long, at the very least, as Mr. Chamberlain remains in control of South African affairs. The Transvaal Government has been blamed for the importation of arms and the construction of forts. Mr. Chamberlain, however, has done his utmost to justify both these measures. The Transvaal Government has been charged in the English Press with arming itself against "the Suzerain Power." The "Suzerain Power," thanks to Mr. Chamberlain, has demonstrated the reasonableness of the distrust which has led to the arming. It is not merely in the proceedings of the South African Committee that the reasonableness of this distrust has been demonstrated. It has been demonstrated even more in Mr. Chamberlain's despatches, in his refusal to submit disputed interpretations of the

London Convention to any kind of arbitration, in his continual fault-finding over the merest technicalities, in his offensive and overbearing reassertion of the British Suzerainty—a Suzerainty which inequitably demands rights and declines to recognise any corresponding responsibilities.

All these things together have produced a state of tension which, though neither Mr. Kruger nor his Government are responsible for it, hangs like a threatening cloud over the commencement of his fourth term of office. At the moment of writing these lines South Africa is nearer to the brink of absolute disaster than it has ever been before. The fact that this tension has been foreseen, as the natural result of the support still accorded by the Imperial Government to Mr. Rhodes, notwithstanding his numerous admissions, does not render it the less serious. It may perhaps be allowable for once for an author to quote his own words, written in the first weeks of 1897, before the South African Committee had commenced its labours. Here is the passage in question :—

“It is possible that that crime [the crime of once more allowing Mr. Rhodes to resume the position of a South African dictator] may be committed. If it is, the misfortunes that will follow will be appalling. The whole peace of South Africa will hang by a thread. Irritation and suspicion will infest every corner. Race enmities will be awakened, which will play into the hands of barbarism, and will infallibly lead up, sooner or later, to one

of the most terrible and desolating wars of modern times? These men, whom you call 'Boers,' whom you deride for their surface failings, are not men who can be lightly dispossessed of their independence. They have their faults, no doubt; but put them in the position of having to fight for their independence, and they will display all the endurance and valour of those whose descendants they are—the Huguenots, who sacrificed everything for the sake of freedom of thought and religion; the Netherlanders, who successfully stood out against the forces of the greatest European Power of the sixteenth century. In the Transvaal, in the Free State, in the Cape Colony, in Natal, these men, who constitute the dominant factor in South Africa, are to be found, bound together by those subtle ties of blood and nationality which survive accumulated oppressions and the flight of years. The cause of one, when it comes to extremes, is the cause of all; and if they see the man whom they regard as an unpunished malefactor visibly supported by the British Government, it will be against the British Government that they will range themselves in sullen hatred or in open defiance. It is possible that this may happen, and if it happens, either the whole structure of civilisation in South Africa will be wiped out, or South Africa will cease to form in any respect a portion of the British Empire."

It is the prospect thus sketched in the first days of 1897 that is being realised in 1898. The British Government, bending before influences as mysterious as they must be maleficent, has decided still to pin its South African faith on the man whom the great majority of Europeans in South Africa regard, and with good reason enough, as an unpunished malefactor. The desolating war of races, which in the early days of 1897 seemed a possibility, has in 1898 become much more than a

'South Africa as it is,' p. 39

probability—one can hardly venture to say, a certainty, for there is always a chance that, at the very last moment something may intervene to stave off the calamity that threatens. The signs of the nearness of that calamity are nevertheless all around us—in the appearance in England of agents commissioned still further to mislead the mind of the public, already well-nigh saturated with misrepresentation with regard to the South African situation; in the visible conspiracy between high functionaries in Pretoria and leading journals in London to create commercial alarm; in the steady but inconspicuous despatch of Imperial reinforcements to South Africa. It may be said in 1898, as it was said in 1897, that if the conflict now visibly threatening begins, it can only have one of two results—either South Africa will cease to form a portion of the British Empire, or it will be utterly wrecked and destroyed. Financial and commercial ruin will fall upon both the British Colonies. The eternal hatred stirred up between the leading European nationalities will for ever render a renewal of prosperity impossible. It is to the substance of that “third proclamation” drawn up at Laing’s Nek in 1881 that those should turn who lightly speak of coercing the Transvaal by force of arms. “Better a ruined country than no country” was the principle then laid down, and that

is the principle that would infallibly be adopted if Mr. Chamberlain's policy should succeed in bringing about the conflict which he appears to be seeking. What makes the situation so especially dangerous is that, in his later despatches, he has left himself with no line of retreat. He has practically prohibited, it would seem almost as if of set purpose resort to diplomacy or discussion. That such a policy pleases metropolitan newspapers that thirst after blood is comprehensible; but nevertheless it is a policy which, by reason of the injustice on which it is founded and the destruction and horror which it tends to create, can only be regarded as criminal.

That is the dark side of the picture as Mr. Kruger's fourth term of office commences. There is, however, a brighter side. There is the hope that, by his tact, his firmness, his watchfulness from hour to hour over the course of public events, he may be able to hold at arm's length the destruction that threatens, until even the diligence of his enemies grows weary and public opinion in Great Britain swings round once more to its normal position. If Mr. Kruger can accomplish this, he will have rendered not only to South Africa but to the British Empire a service utterly beyond the power of thanks—a service the value of which will appear greater and greater as the generations roll.

by. . . Whether his life and his career end in tragedy or in peace, there will be few men of this century who will be spoken of by the men of next century with so much respect and appreciation as Paul Kruger.

NOTE.—While this volume has been going through the press, public attention has been drawn in a marked manner to what has been called “the judicial crisis” in the Transvaal. In order to explain how this question arose, it may be best to quote from the author’s article on “Paul Kruger” which appeared in the March number of the *Fortnightly Review*. After stating that, so far from Mr. Kruger wishing to control the High Court, the aggressive action really came from the Bench, the article proceeds: “Certain farms were proclaimed a public goldfield from a certain date. When the day arrived, it was discovered that a man named Brown, acting on behalf of a group of capitalists, had men ready on the spot to peg out every claim the moment the proclamation came into force. In the meantime independent prospectors had arrived in large numbers. The officials became alarmed, and telegraphed to Pretoria their fears of a serious disturbance of the peace. The Government telegraphed back that the proclamation throwing open the ground would be immediately cancelled by another proclamation. Owing, however, to the shortness of the time, the second proclamation could not be duly published before the first one came into force. Brown, being debarred from pegging out, brought an action against the Government to recover damages. The High Court never disputed either the right of the Government to proclaim a farm or its right to cancel such proclamation by the issue of another. The Court held, however, and properly held, that the display of a telegram expressing an intention to cancel a proclamation was not a legal cancellation, and gave Brown the damages asked for, subject to assessment, a decision which the Government accepted without demur. So far all was well. But, having thus decided the case brought before him, the Chief Justice went on to deliver an opinion—it could hardly be called a judgment—on the legislative powers of the Volksraad, claiming for the High Court the right and power to review the acts of the legislature from a constitutional standpoint. To this claim both the Government and the Volksraad strongly objected. There was, they contended, no such power conferred on the High Court under the constitution; it was in conflict with the admitted and recognised practice of the Volksraad for many years past; it was directly antagonistic to a judgment delivered by the Chief Justice himself some years previously; and, beyond all this, having regard to the peculiar circumstances of the country, it might afford some wealthy enemy of the Republic the means, through a friendly disposed Bench, of defying the authority of the Volksraad. That is the way in which the dispute is regarded from the side of the Transvaal Government, and, at the very least, no fair-minded person can say that the objections raised to the action of the Bench—or rather of a majority of the Bench—were unimportant or ill-founded.”

A compromise was arrived at, the judges, as a body, undertaking not to exercise any testing power for the present, while the Government undertook to introduce such legislation as might remove all doubt about the position of the judges. Nothing more was heard of the matter till the 5th of February, 1898, when Chief Justice Kotze, acting quite apart from his brother judges, addressed a letter to the President, declaring that as the Government had violated its pledge, the compromise was at an end, and that he should in future exercise a testing power in respect of measures and resolutions passed by the Volksraad. The Volksraad session ended in November, Mr. Kotze at that time making no protest. Three months later, when the general result of the presidential election must have been known, he denounced the Government for an alleged breach of faith. The Government responded by dismissing him from office under the provisions of a law passed in 1897. As a reply, Mr. Kotze declared the Courts closed—a step highly calculated to prejudice both the political and commercial interests of the Republic. The other judges, however, whom Mr. Kotze had never consulted, declined altogether to accept his view of the situation, and kept the Courts open. The incident caused no real excitement either in Pretoria or Johannesburg, while the Bench is now probably stronger than it was before. Mr. Gregorowski, the Acting Chief Justice, is as good a lawyer as Mr. Kotze, while the addition to the Bench of Mr. Reitz, for several years Chief Justice and afterwards President of the Orange Free State, has given it a marked distinction. That Mr. Kotze's action was highly calculated to embarrass the Government, there can be no doubt. Whether he intended to embarrass the Government is a matter of opinion.

